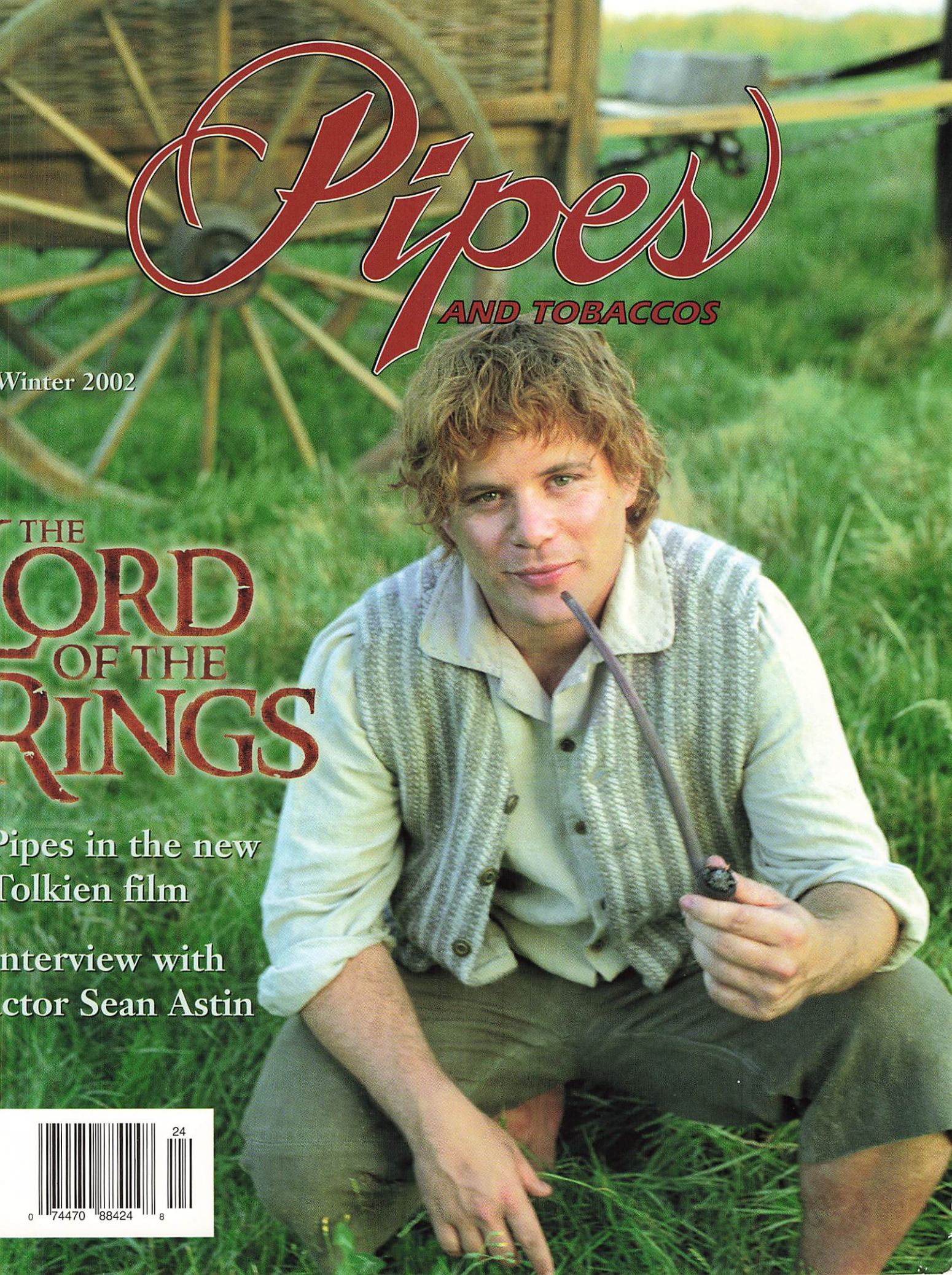
Pipes
AND TOBACCOS
Winter 2002
THE
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Pipes in the new
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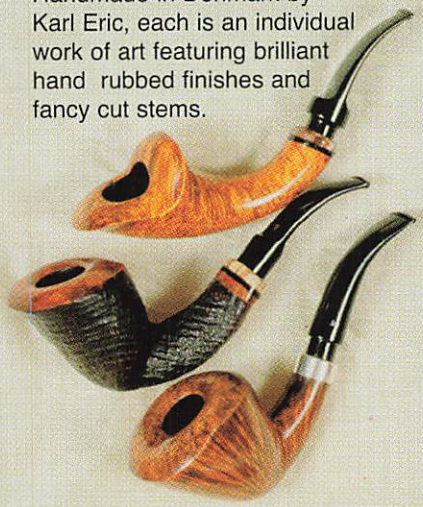

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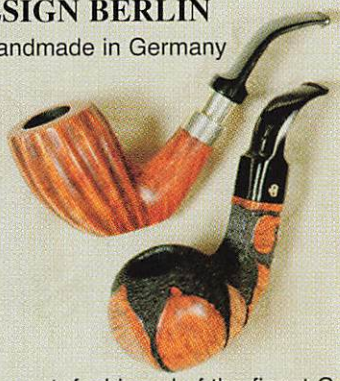

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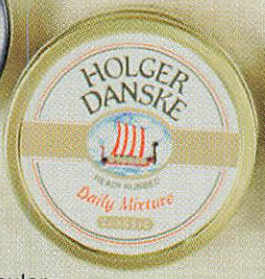

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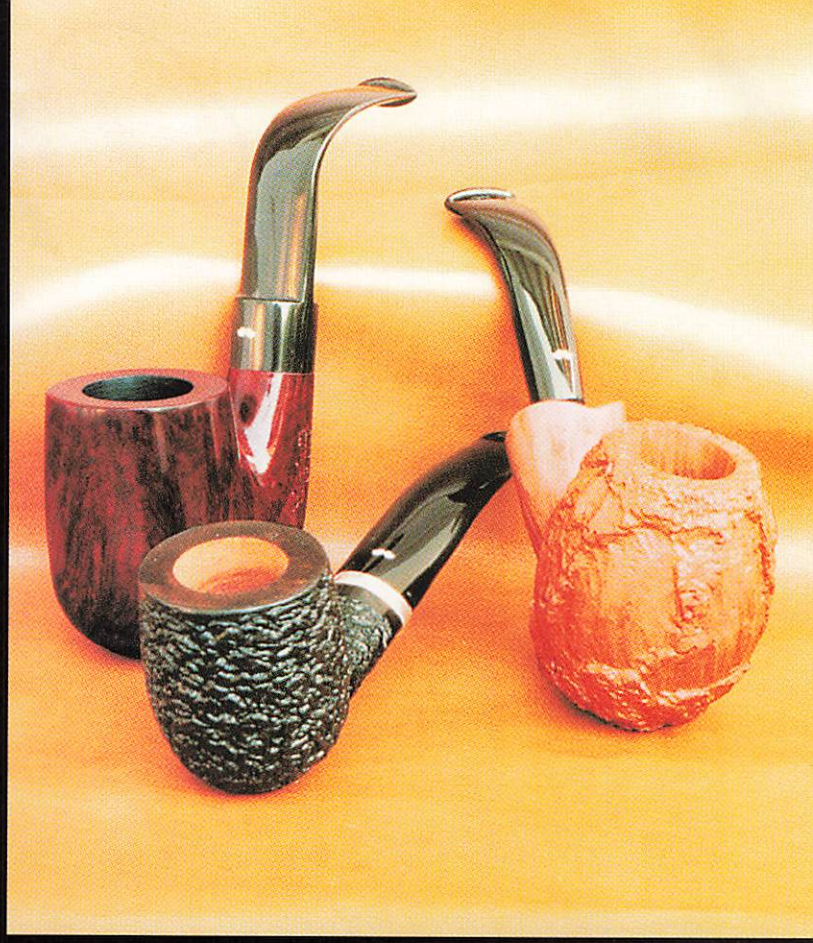

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Pipes AND TOBACCOS

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Pipe collector Chuck Rio writes a moving tribute to his close friend, American pipemaker Clarence Mickles, who died earlier this year.

16 **A Pipe-Smoking Hobbit from the Shire**
The first installment of the motion picture adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, is coming to theaters near you. *P&T* gives you a sneak preview of the pipes used for the film.

22 **Four Generations of Pipes**
The Blatter family has been in the pipe business since the 1890s, owning pipe factories and tobacco shops in London, and Cape Town and Durban, South Africa, but in 1907, they moved to Montreal, Canada, where they still make pipes and sell tobacco.

26 **Closing in on Perfection**
As graduation from law school loomed, Rainer Barbi faced a difficult decision—practice law or pursue his interest in pipecarving. Fortunately for pipe smokers around the world, he chose the latter.

43 **2001 *P&T* Pipecarving Results**
The results are in! Judging contest entries was an extremely difficult but enjoyable task for people who attended this year's CORPS pipe show. *P&T* proudly proclaims this year's winners and gives you an opportunity to see some of this year's entries.

52 **Wilderness Artistry**
Today, pipemaker Lee von Erck carves his nature-inspired pipes in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Von Erck has spent nearly 20 years perfecting his skills and revolutionary pipe-curing process, which has allowed him to develop a large international following.

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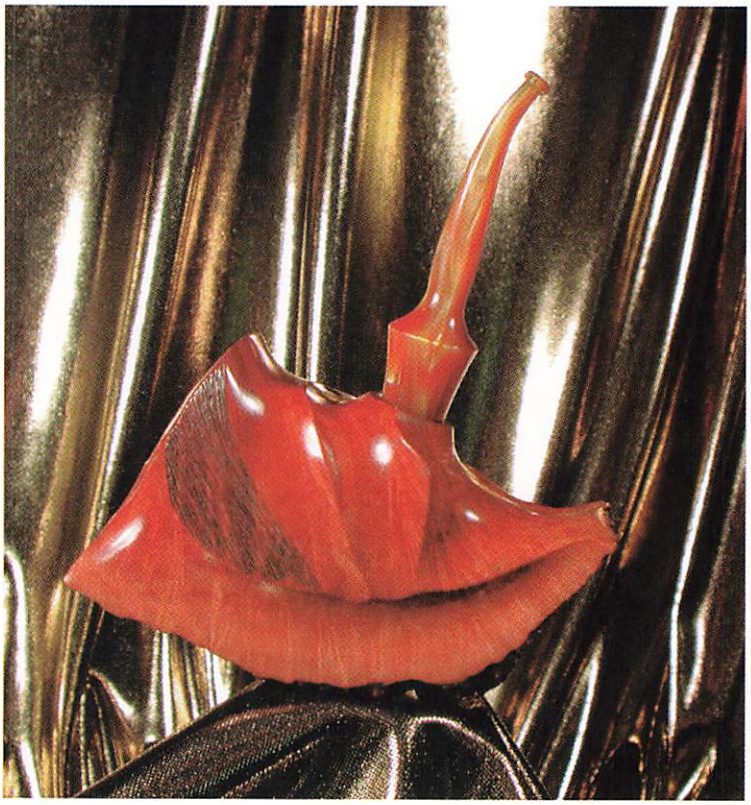
Winter 2002



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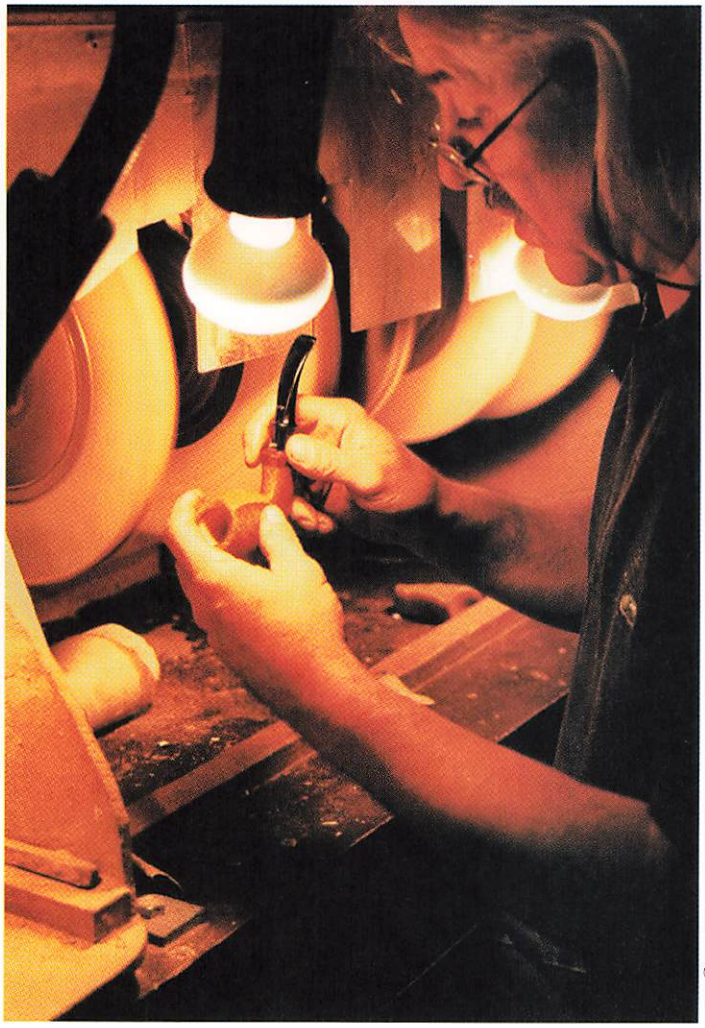

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56 **The Castello "Remember" Pipe**
When Franco Coppo watched the events of the September 11 tragedy unfold on his television, he wanted to do something to help the victims. Coppo, along with the pipe artisans of Castello, created a stunning two-bowl replica of the Twin Towers. The pipe was auctioned with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the Red Cross relief fund.

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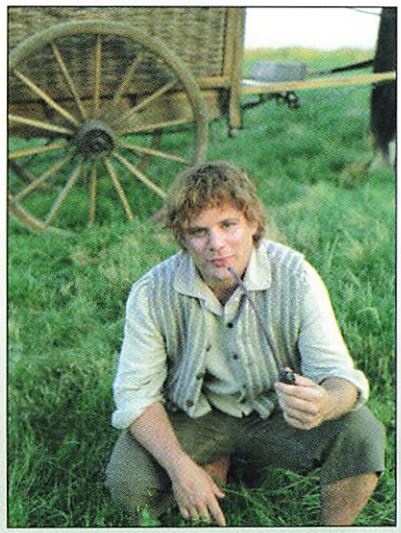
Cover

Actor Sean Astin plays Samwise Gamgee in The Fellowship of the Ring, *a movie adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's first book in* The Lord of the Rings *trilogy.*



Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

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Selective modifications

I readily admit that I've done some pretty stupid things in my life. There was, for example, the time I drank 11 shots of tequila, jumped the fence at the city zoo and challenged a full-grown mountain goat to a head-butting contest. Then there was the time I proved my manhood by leaping off the roof of a fraternity house to belly-flop onto the hood of an abandoned '59 Studebaker. Even worse was the preposterous lapse of judgment that made me think it a good idea to tell my mother-in-law that her legendary chicken-and-dumplings were the culinary equivalent of rabbit droppings in curdled swamp slime.

Life-threatening acts aside, I've also done some pretty silly things with pipes and tobacco. But these acts were not unprecedented, as a look at the fine pipe magazine from the 1940s, *Pipe Lovers*, will reveal.

It was evidently pretty commonplace back then to perform do-it-yourself improvements on one's pipes—things we would hesitate to recommend these days. However, *P&T* takes a conservative stance with pipes, assuming that most pipe smokers do not want to risk permanent harm to their collections. But, honestly, we probably all have pipes that are worth the risk. I have pipes that have no value and smoke terribly. I use them for yardwork and throwing at loud cats in the night. Those are the pipes to experiment with.

Pipe Lovers occasionally offered some pretty bizarre ideas, proposed by its readers in a regular feature called "Pipecraft." In the March 1948 issue, for example, we learn that a fine way to cool the smoke in our pipes is to drill a hole in the heel of the bowl to let fresh air mix with the smoke. Don't try this with a $1,000 collectible pipe. But I've had pipes that I wouldn't mind risking. I've had a few pipes that smoked so bad I would actually enjoy torturing them with power tools.

Another cooling method, found in the August 1949 issue, recommends placing a couple of chips of dry ice in the tobacco chamber before filling and smoking one's pipe. That would certainly cool the smoke nicely for a few minutes until the bowl cracked. I'm anxious to try it on the sulfuric acid-cured radium pipe with rat poison bowl coating that my mother-in-law gave me following my chicken-and-dumplings remark.

Another one from *Pipe Lovers* also promises failure. In the August 1949 issue, a reader recommends squeezing the juice of half an orange over one's tobacco, mixing it thoroughly and storing it in a humidor for several days with some orange peel to attain a "light taste and flavor of orange blossoms." But we know now that that road leads only to mold, misfortune and madness. Tobacco has endured many indignities at my hands as well. I've put it in food processors, I've boiled it in Mason jars, I've microwaved it, I've hung it up to humidify in the shower, I've subjected it to extremes of profanity and polka music—I've even added scotch and soda to it and baked it over charcoal briquettes. None of those experiments were successes.

Pipes have been around for a long time, and every experiment possible, from asbestos bowl linings to soaking pipes overnight in red wine (*PL*, March 1947) has been tried. *P&T* always recommends that pipes be treated with care and dignity, mainly because *we* don't want to get blamed if *you* destroy a pipe with reckless modifications. But we are all tempted to try a little tinkering from time to time. If you have a really terrible pipe that you wouldn't mind losing, one that taunts and tortures you with wretched smoke after wretched smoke, who could find fault with a little Frankensteinian experimentation? But limit it to pipes you hate, and remember, *never* experiment with tequila and mountain goats.

Chuck

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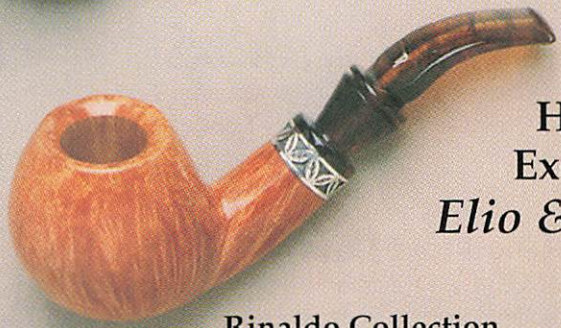

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P&T *Readers Respond*

Delinquency and Detectives

I recently purchased the Fall 2000 issue and read the article titled "First Pipe." I had a similar experience. Forty-nine years ago, when I was five years old, I caught my grandfather away from his pipe and glass of moonshine. I climbed up into his big chair, took the old Kaywoodie loaded with Prince Albert and took a puff and liked it. I tried the moonshine and liked it also.

My favorite author is Raymond Chandler, who wrote the Philip Marlowe detective stories. Marlowe smoked a bulldog pipe, and I recently discovered a short story in which Marlowe smokes Pearce's tobacco. Has anyone heard of this blend? Does anyone know where I can find it?

Dewayne Ellington
Ohatchee, Alabama

P&T: *We're unfamiliar with Pearce's. Perhaps some of our readers will know and will be kind enough to report on it. In the meantime, we hope you also enjoyed the Chandler article in our last issue.*

Focus

I enjoyed the Winter 2001 issue very much, especially the article about Professor Tolkien. There's nothing quite like enjoying a briar full of English blend while following the adventures and travails of Frodo and company.

I also enjoy cigars very much, and I subscribed to *Cigar Aficionado* for a time until it turned into a "men's magazine." *P&T* is to pipes what *C.A.* could and should be to cigars. Your staff and contributors' passions for briar and leaf show in the great feature articles. Keep up the great work.

Matt Schuster
Cockeysville, Maryland

P&T: *Thanks for the kind words, Matt. If you liked the story on Tolkien, then you will definitely want to read this issue's story on the movie adaptation of Tolkien's* Lord of the Rings *trilogy.*

Good Old Days

Recently, a friend and fellow pipe smoker was poring over his collection of ancient magazines and came across an article about pipes in a 1954 edition of *Argosy* magazine. It's interesting to note that much of the general information about pipes was the same nearly a half century ago as it is today. I chuckled when I read some of the price quotes. A Dunhill straight-grain billiard was $10 and a Comoy was $2.50. Many of the pipe smokers back then paid $10 to $15 for a pipe without caring for blemishes on it. I guess the cost of a decent pipe was a true reflection of the

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times. Ah, for the good old days! Perhaps sometime in the future you too might explore pipe nostalgia.

Don Russell
Turner Valley, Alberta, Canada

P&T: *It's fun to look through old magazines and see advertisements for pipes and pipe tobacco, to see those prices and especially immerse oneself in the respectability and acceptance that pipe smoking once enjoyed. Although we will never see pipe prices fall to those levels again, maybe we will see a return of social acceptance of pipe smoking unmatched since those good old days.*

I visited my mother in her rest home on the coast a little while ago and experienced a most seminal moment relating to pipe smoking that I would like to share with you. I was moved to speechlessness.

I had stepped outside the considerably ornate and nearly intimidating building to smoke my pipe for at least a few moments. I was looking to blend into some of the lush landscaping that surrounded the building so that I could evade detection and avoid the threatened wrath of management, who warned me in a rather severe way that I would be removed from the premises if I was caught smoking.

The family is paying a bundle each month to keep my mom in the rest home, and needless to say, I was just a bit out of sorts with the management. But I told myself that it would be counter productive to alienate these people. Mom was here every day and was dependent on them for her well-being. The last thing I needed was to have the management call my brother, who lives nearby, to report that I was uncooperative and disruptive. He and I had previously chatted about his view of my personal habits and frequent disregard for the current expected societal standards that are simply "common courtesy."

I loaded my pipe while attempting to maintain the lowest possible profile. While carefully observing the nearby doors through the leaves of a beautiful shrub, I took a chance and lit my pipe. In short order, I began to unwind and tried to relax.

About 10 minutes later, an immaculately dressed elderly lady came outside. She was escorted by a younger man who was obviously her son. As she and her escort passed by, the lady stopped abruptly and looked around in a surprised and perplexed manner. She spotted me right away and smiled the most radiant and beautiful smile I'd seen in years.

"Just a moment, son," she said, as the two of them walked over to me.

"Young man, my late husband always smoked a pipe and I still love the smell of a pipe. Most all of his friends smoked pipes and they were gentlemen, too. Things seemed to be less hectic then and people's values were quite different."

The lady just stood there and leaned on her son's arm. She again smiled at me, took an exaggerated breath and then they walked away. She was still smiling.

Lawrence V. Hawley
Fresno, CA

P&T: *What a great story, Lawrence. Of course, we would never disagree with such an astute observation about the gentlemanly qualities of pipe smokers.*

Design Contest

I bought my first copy of *P&T* in my local pipe shop. It's such a beautiful publication that I immediately subscribed to it. For some time, I have been admiring the pipe drawings of Stavros A. Gavris in the *Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris*. I always wished that someone would actually transform his creations for ink and paper into an actual pipe. Lo and behold, I opened the Spring 2001 issue of *P&T* and there it was—an article about Gavris' winning pipe design being made into a pipe by Mike Butera! Thank you, *P&T*, for bringing my musing to fruition.

Lee Davis
Cyberspace

It was one of the most exciting moments of my life to learn that my design had won the Pipe of the Year award. I must admit, I thought I had a good chance of

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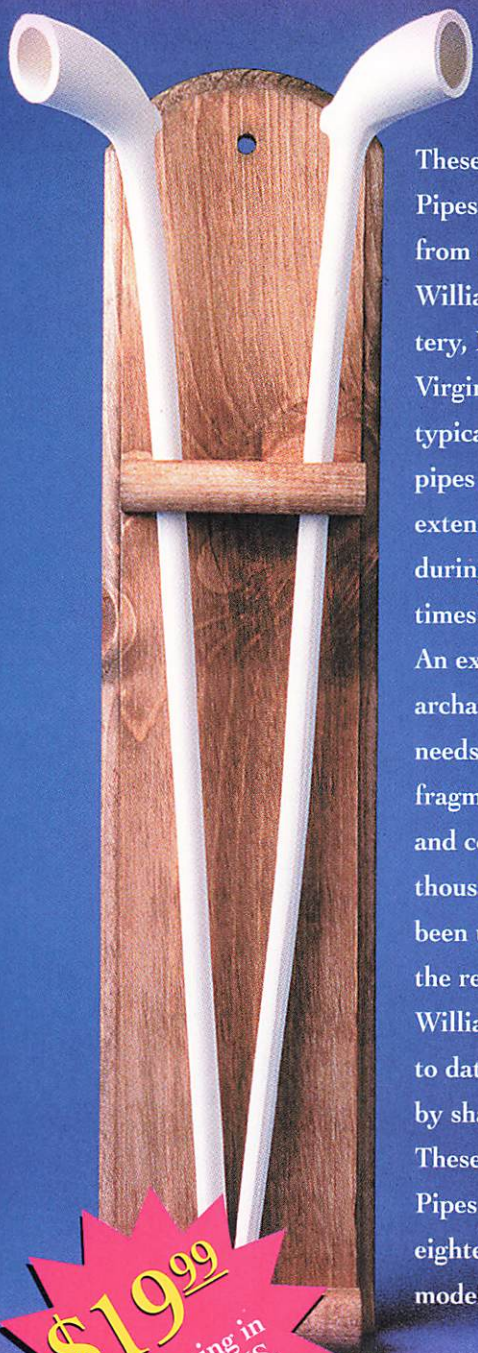

These Tavern Pipes are made from clay by the Williamsburg Pottery, Lightfoot, Virginia. They are typical of those pipes used extensively during colonial times.

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winning, but as the months went by without any word from *P&T*, I had given up hope until *P&T* notified me that I had won. I couldn't have learned so much about pipes without *P&T*. The education I have gotten from reading *P&T* over the years—I have every issue from the beginning—and the exposure to so many beautiful pipes throughout the magazine's pages have greatly contributed to my winning this contest. Thank you again, and I hope that *P&T* continues to be published for many years to come.

Stavros A. Gavris
Houston, Texas

Future pipe-smoking contestant?

Recently, my doctor told me that pipe smoking is the best tranquilizer in existence. It's better than Valium or any other prescription drug.

I have been smoking a pipe for more than 62 years with no visible ill effects. I still have full lung capacity and don't suffer from fatigue and other supposed manifestations of tobacco use. A pipe smoker reams, scrapes, cleans and fills his pipe carefully with fine tobacco unadulterated by chemicals. He lights his pipe carefully, tamps it to be sure it's lighted properly and relaxes, forgetting his problems for a little while.

There is an interesting story in the summer issue of *P&T* titled "Innocents Abroad." It is about a pipe-smoking contest won by Monsieur Ipseiz, who smoked a virgin pipe for two hours and 53 minutes. I was fascinated by the meticulous care he took filling his pipe, lighting it and tamping the tobacco as the contest progressed. I have tried his technique, but so far, my best time is 47 minutes. It's an interesting experience and if you do it, let me know your results.

Al Gebbs
Tulsa, Oklahoma

P&T: *Al, you've beat our best time by two minutes. You will be the first guy we'll call if we ever decide to form a* P&T *team. You know what they say, "If you can't beat 'em, bribe 'em with anything they want to get 'em to join your team."*

Hello from Australia

I'm 36 years old and have been a casual pipe smoker for 16 years. I had absolutely no idea about the right pipe-smoking technique or variety and quality of tobaccos until about two years ago, when I first discovered your magazine. I particularly like the articles dealing with tobacco companies, Chuck's brilliant preface, and Trial by Fire. From this section I have worked out which tobaccos I should have a go at, and which to leave behind. Recently, I tried some Clan Shaw Bombay mixture and found it an excellent smoke. So far, you haven't done a story on this company and I think you should. Keep up the good work!

Scott Camac
Somewhere in Australia

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Meerschaum

BALLEBY
Briar

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Thanks *P&T*

Upon the arrival of *P&T*'s Summer 2001 issue, the story about collecting humidors caught my eye.

My son, William David Metcalf, was a pipe smoker and owned many beautiful pipes. Sad to say, he died in March of this year.

The article, with pictures of humidors, written by Cyndi Page was most informative. I have been a collector of all types of majolica for 25 years or more, and have some 60 or more tobacco jars. Some of these are very beautiful and most of them are in perfect condition. I've enclosed a few pictures and I hope you enjoy them.

Dorothy B. Metcalf
Berwyn, Illinois

P&T: *We're glad that you enjoyed our story on collecting humidors. If someone with your knowledge and expertise about humidors found the article informative, I'm sure that everyone else did too. Thanks for sending us the pictures of some of the items in your collection—it's fantastic.*

My recent stop by *P&T* headquarters was truly a pleasure and the highlight of my Tobacco Tour 2001. Thanks very much for taking time out between rounds of golf, er, I mean out of your busy writing schedule to visit with me. Kim and Melissa were also a delight to work with.

I must admit there were some surprises during my visit. I'm not sure what I expected of the exalted *P&T* headquarters, but security was much tighter than I expected. The body cavity search upon leaving the Pipe Museum was among the most thorough and professional I have ever endured, rivaled only by my wife's searches when she suspects I have found a new pipe shop. You'll be glad to know I'm feeling much better; I am now able to walk nearly upright again.

Melissa was such a trooper! I learned some new vocabulary words when she asked me how many Pipe of the Year boxes I wanted her to open. I replied, "All of them," and with her dedicated help, I successfully selected a suitable pipe in slightly less than 12 hours.

Unfortunately, I couldn't afford the one I selected. So I selected another, which I also could not afford. I feared at one point that she actually had lost her patience when she found that I possessed nothing more than $20. Determined not to give up, however, she disappeared for a few moments and returned with a pipe, muttering something about, "Chuck will never miss this...."

I am so proud of that Pipe of the Year. The crack in the shank is barely visible and I have learned to regard the chunk out of the blackened bowl rim as "art carving." The gum foil silver band

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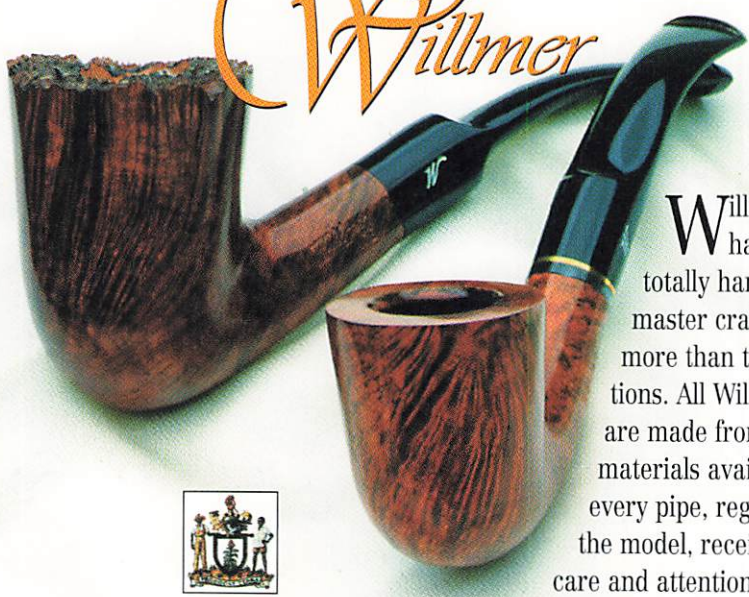

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is elegant, although the magic marker Pipe of the Year designation has faded somewhat. Best of all, at that peaceful time of day when the sun is setting and I am sitting on my deck enjoying the evening breeze, if I hold the pipe just right, the putty fill on the bottom looks just like your car!!!

I'll treasure the experience. (I'll have to. My wife won't let me come back until I've paid off the credit card charges I accumulated on this trip, which should be sometime in 2047.)

Greg Small
Cyberspace

P&T: *Now you know what we go through each day just to get into our office! Dayton neglected to mention all of the security precautions he installed to protect the* P&T *Pipe Museum when we interviewed to work here. Chuck has been looking for his favorite pipe in his collection for weeks now—mystery solved.*

Just wanted to say thanks for the wonderful magazine. I have learned so much more about pipe smoking and tobaccos since I subscribed three years ago. You have helped me increase my enjoyment in the evenings on my front porch with a relaxing bowl of my favorite tobacco.

Thanks for all the contacts you supply me with in the magazine. I used J.B. Russell to find a Nording Hunter 1999 pipe that I had been searching for. It's a beautiful pipe! I would not know that it existed if it wasn't for *P&T*. Thanks again.

Pete Dion
Cyberspace

Back to the briar

Over the years, you have answered several pipe and tobacco-related questions for me and I am very grateful! You even placed one of my questions in the Winter, 1999 issue.

I don't smoke a pipe as much as I used to. However, the only pipe I have purchased this year will be arriving at my house in a day or two. It is a flawless straight-grain, mushroom-shaped Former pipe. I hope it smokes as nice as it looks!

I am the very proud owner of every *P&T* issue and each is in pristine condition! I plan to continue receiving them until either they are no longer obtainable or the good Lord calls me to that great humidor in the sky! My point in writing this is to let you know how much the publication has meant to me over the years. I realize this more than ever right now—when our country is being harassed and certain scumbags are trying to unnerve everybody. Tensions are high. We will get back to a better state in time.

I have found that my old friends (pipes) can still transport me to a wonderful sense of well-being. Yes, they are still among the finest tranquilizers with added benefit of euphoric flavors! I have always cleaned a pipe after every smoke (pipe cleaner in the shank), and it does make a difference.

If anyone has placed his pipes on the rack for an extended period of time (like I did), I would urge him to take them out, wipe off the dust, blow through 'em, and fill 'em with his favorite tobacco again.

In these times of uncertainty, I have found my pipes to be not only enjoyable but a necessity. I owe it to my wife, who told me to dust those pipes off and relax for a change! It has worked more than I could have ever imagined it would—a smile on my face and absolute relaxation again!

Thank you for all of your articles and please do continue them. The photography is outstanding also. As most people say, it is a bit too long between issues. However, each issue would probably not be appreciated as much if we didn't have to wait so damn long for the next one! Keep up the good work.

Mark Spears
Cyberspace

P&T: *We're happy to hear that you've dusted off your pipes and resumed your hobby. We suspect that current events have helped many of us refocus on the important things in life—not time clocks, promotions or careers, but quality time with family, friends and, of course, our pipes.* ***P&T***

Clarence Mickles

The pipe world recently lost one of its brightest stars, Clarence Mickles. We at Pipes and tobaccos *deeply regret his passing and pay tribute to him through the words of his friend, Chuck Rio.*

I met Clarence Mickles more than 30 years ago at the Snake-Pit, a small gun club in Indiana. He was smoking a pipe, of course. We had a common interest in trapshooting, but I would never have guessed that we would eventually share an interest in pipe smoking too.

I started smoking a pipe in 1978. The manager of the local Tinder Box pipe shop, George Mantz, asked me if I would like to meet a man who repaired pipes and made pipes part-time. We went over to the man's house, we walked in, and to my surprise, there stood Clarence sanding a pipe.

For the next 23 years I spent as many weekends as I could with Clarence in that little garage. What I saw over those years was a man who became a premier repairman, a great pipemaker and a close friend.

There wasn't a pipe he couldn't repair. He was innovative and his technical skills were unsurpassed. He made his own tools to carve the pipes he made. I had the pleasure of attending at least nine pipe shows a year with Clarence over the last six years of his life—years he spent as a full-time pipemaker.

Clarence did not have a sandblasting machine, so he developed his own "hand-blast" finish with the tools he had. Other pipemakers at the shows said his hand-blasts were fantastic and a style unique to him. He donated one of his pipes as a door prize at every show he attended. He was a kind and generous person, and he was always willing to help a fellow pipe smoker or pipemaker.

Just before his appearance in the Winter 1998 issue of *P&T*, Clarence's son, Clarence Junior, had a boy named Mason. Mason spent a lot of time in the garage helping his Grandpa work on pipes. Clarence was so proud of his little helper that he took pictures of Mason filing and sanding his piece of briar. He brought these pictures to all the pipe shows and laid them out on his table along with his pipes for all to see.

Family was the most important part of Clarence's life. His love of his wife, Kathy, his two daughters, his son and his grandson far surpassed his love of pipes. He was a model family man and a great friend. He is sorely missed by all of us who knew him.

Chuck Rio
8/13/01

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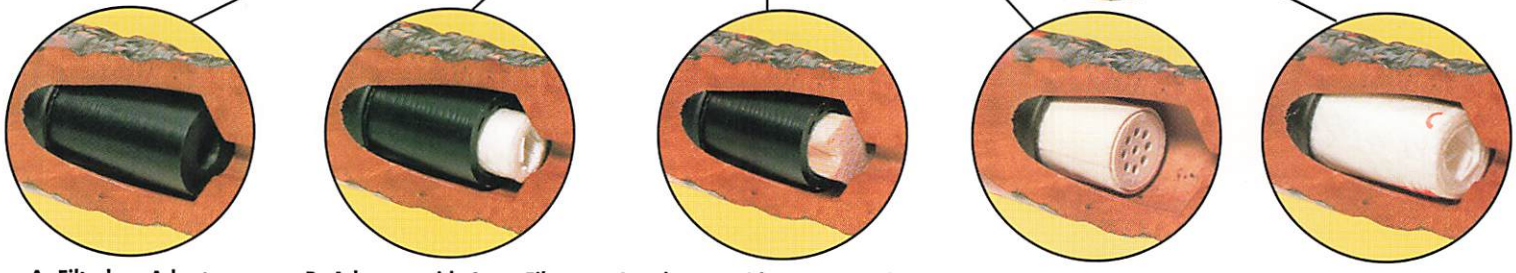

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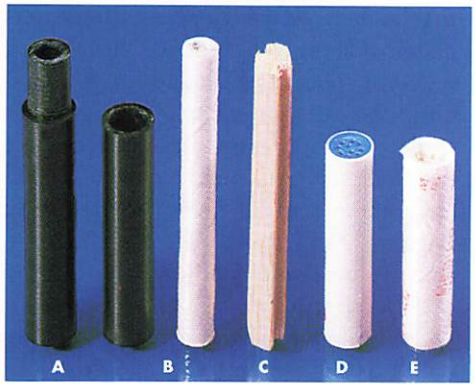

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A PIPE-SMOKING HOBBIT FROM THE SHIRE

P&T *takes you behind the scenes of the motion picture adaption of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic fantasy trilogy,* The Lord of the Rings

by Jim Lawson

"I discovered what an ardent pipe-smoking individual Tolkien was and how passionate he was...about the value of good, relaxing, pipe-smoking."
-Sean Astin

The first installment of the long-anticipated *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (based on the first book in the trilogy), opens in theaters nationwide on Dec. 19, 2001. Sean Astin, a 30-year-old actor, producer, writer and director, with more than 25 movies to his credit, portrays Samwise Gamgee, the devoted servant, peerless friend, and comrade-in-arms of fellow hobbit Frodo Baggins. Astin spoke to *P&T* about his role as a pipe-smoking hobbit in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

A couple of years ago, while driving on a Los Angeles freeway, Astin received a call from his agent notifying him that auditions were about to open for a *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy. Astin's response was, "What's *Lord of the Rings*?"

His agent informed him that the project was a film adaptation of an international bestseller and that it was in the actor's best interest to consider auditioning. Immediately after the phone call, Astin raced to the nearest Barnes & Noble bookstore and purchased a copy of Tolkien's magnum opus. "I discovered what an ardent pipe-smoking individual Tolkien was," says Astin, "and how passionate he was in his writings about the value of good, relaxing, pipe-smoking." The actor auditioned for the role of hobbit Samwise Gamgee after reading only the first half of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Astin admits that he was so anxious to learn whether or not the part would be his that he found himself unable to enjoy the rest of the book. Months after the audition, he received word that the part was his. Since then, Astin has read the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy a number of times.

"Making *Lord of the Rings* was the hardest thing I've ever had to do in my life," says Astin, "and at times, I questioned my ability to survive the experience." Splashing through frigid alpine lakes and climbing active volcanoes with prosthetic feet were difficult for him. He and the other *Fellowship* cast members often arose at 4:30 a.m. to undergo three hours of makeup and the application of hobbit feet and ears. Astin bore an

Opposite, top: Frodo Baggins, played by Elijah Wood, enjoys a contemplative moment with his pipe. Bottom: Viggo Mortensen, cast as Aragorn, lights his churchwarden.

Photos courtesy of New Line Cinema

Photo courtesy of New Line Cinema

Sir Ian McKellen plays Gandalf. Prop makers specifically designed Gandalf's pipe's long stem to avoid his long, flowing beard. Sean Astin and Elijah Wood (opposite) star as Samwise Gamgee and Frodo Baggins, two average hobbits who find themselves swept into a string of world-saving adventures in The Fellowship of the Ring.

additional burden: He agreed to put on 30 pounds for the role. At mealtime, film director Peter Jackson often urged him to eat more by calling out, "Another helping of shepherd's pie for Mr. Astin, or perhaps an extra dessert!" The actor says that some of the scenes involved bungee-jumping off cliffs and paragliding, and many of the action scenes were "dangerous, but calculated." Nonetheless, Astin describes his 15 months on New Zealand's North Island as the "most rewarding, most exciting and most challenging role" he has played in his 20-year career.

Barrie M. Osborne, a *Lord of the Rings* producer, says of Astin, "He is a wonderful choice for the role of Sam because he brings a real joviality to the role as well as empathy for Sam's struggles. I think it's also a real bonus that he and Elijah Wood [who plays Frodo Baggins] are such good friends. That closeness really shows in the relationship that develops between their characters."

When asked how faithful an adaptation the film is to Tolkien's book, Astin responds, "I would say that Peter [Jackson] was completely faithful to the book in every way possible. He's a lover of the book." [In a recent interview, Jackson himself said he has made the Tolkien films that he always wanted to see, and that special-effects technology has now advanced to the degree that he was able to incorporate the details found in the author's work.]

Astin says that pipe smoking is a necessary part of the films, particularly in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, even to the extent that the wizard Gandalf, played by Sir Ian McKellen, is shown blowing magical smoke rings. Astin admits that he really is not a smoker at all, though he has played cigarette-smoking characters in the past. While reading the screenplays for *Lord of the Rings*, he was pleased to learn that Sam and the other members of the Fellowship would be portrayed as fervent lovers of pipes and "pipe-weed."

After filming began, Astin says that he repeatedly asked the Props department for his character's pipe, but it was some weeks before the custom pipe was given to him. Meanwhile, during a visit to the eastern coastal city of Napier, on New Zealand's North Island, Astin and his wife, Christine, spotted a beautiful Peterson pipe in a local pipe shop. After purchasing the Peterson pipe, he regularly smoked it in his dressing room as a means of helping him get into character.

One day, while filming atop an active volcano, with an ever-present odor of sulfur, Astin says he smelled "this gorgeous, sweet, pipe tobacco" emanating from a crew member's pipe. Astin approached the man, Randy Cook, a special-effects supervisor, and they began discussing pipe smoking. Cook gave Astin some of his tobacco, Mayfair, a French vanilla and nougat-flavored blend that he buys regularly from Gus' Smoke Shop in Sherman Oaks,

Photo courtesy of New Line Cinema

California. During a two-week break in filming, Astin returned to the United States and purchased as much Mayfair as he could legally buy to take back to New Zealand. Soon, some of the other pipe-smoking actors, especially Elijah Wood, began smoking the aromatic Mayfair blend.

Astin says that the bulk of the pipe-smoking scenes occur in the first film. There are a number of campfire scenes in *The Fellowship of the Rings* in which Frodo and Sam smoke their unconventional, wooden pipes. Many other characters, including elves and extras, also smoke pipes in the first film.

Gandalf is the character who smokes a pipe most often on screen. His pipe has a very long and curved stem, specifically chosen so as to not interfere with his voluminous, flowing beard. Aragorn, played by Viggo Mortensen, smokes a churchwarden-type pipe, in accordance with Tolkien's book. The hobbits, who average three feet, six inches in height, have, according to Nick Weir, propmaster of the *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, "slightly more intricately curved pipes with small bowls."

* * *

The production of pipes and various smoking implements was the responsibility of Weir. A native New Zealander, Weir has been making props for the film and television industry for nearly 20 years. He spoke to *P&T* about the challenges that he and his team faced in producing pipes similar to those smoked by residents of the imaginary Middle-earth, 7,000 years ago.

After Weir was given conceptual pipe drawings, his prop designers created detailed designs. After design approval, the prop makers produced pipe prototypes made of medium density fiberboard. These prototypes were shown to Peter Jackson, who selected the designs to be utilized.

The wooden pipes used in the movies—all members of the Fellowship smoked wooden pipes—were made of ash. The pipe stems were made without mouthpieces, separately from the bowls, and the two parts were then glued together. Next, each pipe was pre-burned at around 1,400 degrees with a small hand torch to make it look well-smoked. Then the crew burned some tobacco in each pipe bowl by rigging a small suction device to each stem.

"We tried to make the pipes out of pine," Weir says, laughing, "but they weren't very successful!" When he discovered that pine pipes burn out rapidly, he turned to macrocarpa, a semihard evergreen native to California but also grown in New Zealand. (Macrocarpa was used extensively in the fabrication of the custom-made furniture in the films.) Macrocarpa proved unsatisfactory, because the pipes often split. Briar was briefly considered as a pipemaking material, but because it wasn't available locally, and the cost to import it was prohibitive, ash was used.

Weir and his five-member team of prop makers made approximately 100 wooden pipes before production began. He says that, on average, it took his team one day to produce a single pipe. "We put an equal amount of time into each pipe," notes Weir, "so that any of them could be shot in close-up." Six different pipe shapes were produced. The script called for many of the elfin characters to

smoke clay pipes. Although one of Weir's prop makers had a little experience working with clay, none of the team knew about clay pipemaking. A local tobacconist provided Weir with a couple of clay churchwardens to study. Rather than purchasing hundreds of conventional clay pipes, because authenticity was paramount, Weir decided to create unique clay pipes from scratch.

Weir says that clay pipemaking was a real learning experience for his crew. "The first several clay pipes that we made came out looking very odd. We experimented with different types of clay, until we discovered that a very hard clay was needed." The prop makers were able to produce batches of 50 pipes at a time, once the molds were fine-tuned. The pipes spent two full days being fired in the kiln, and then were slowly brought down to ambient air temperature.

Between the wooden and clay pipes produced for the films, the clay pipes, according to Weir, were closest in appearance to what is commercially available. However, one clay pipe style they made had a very curvy stem that was nearly S-shaped. Although hundreds of clay pipes were made prior to filming, Weir's crew was forced to produce additional ones, because many of the fragile pieces were broken during shooting.

The prop makers fashioned a number of leather tobacco pouches for the smokers. Of the two pouch styles designed, one had a leather drawstring, while the other was a simple roll-up type. Moviegoers will also see Bilbo Baggins' pipe stand, made of the aforementioned macrocarpa.

Weir found the *Lord of the Rings* project to be challenging and thoroughly enjoyable. "In most projects," he notes, "I deal with actual time periods. For *Lord of the Rings*, we sorted out the designs and created them. I had a set of scripts with me all the time, and kept a set of Tolkien's books on my desk. I would absolutely sign on to do this job again."

* * *

For the pipe-smoking scenes, the actors were presented with the choice of either a mild pipe tobacco or an herbal non-tobacco product. Astin believes that all the hobbit actors in the Fellowship opted for genuine tobacco. "Every hobbit is a good hobbit," he says, "and a good adult hobbit loves his pipe tobacco!" He claims that none of the other actors, during filming, took pipe smoking as seriously as he did.

Astin's only previous pipe-smoking experience was during the making of a short film, *Kangaroo Court*, that he produced and directed. The film's score was composed by Miles Goodman, an avid pipe smoker. While Goodman wrote, Astin puffed on the composer's pipe. *Kangaroo Court* was nominated for the Best Short Film Academy Award in 1995.

Astin is following in the footsteps of his famous actor-parents. His father, John Astin, is best known as Gomez Addams, from the hit TV show *The Addams Family*. His mother is the Academy Award- and Emmy-winning actress Patty Duke. Both parents continue to act regularly.

Sean Astin, at 30, has already compiled an impressive body of work. Among his many films are *The Goonies*, *Bulworth*, *Rudy*, *The War of the Roses*, *Memphis Belle* and *Staying Together*. He envisions a future behind the camera, as a filmmaker, writer and director. But for now, he is thrilled with his involvement in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy as a pipe-smoking hobbit who goes from frightened gardener to seven-term mayor of Hobbiton. *P&T*

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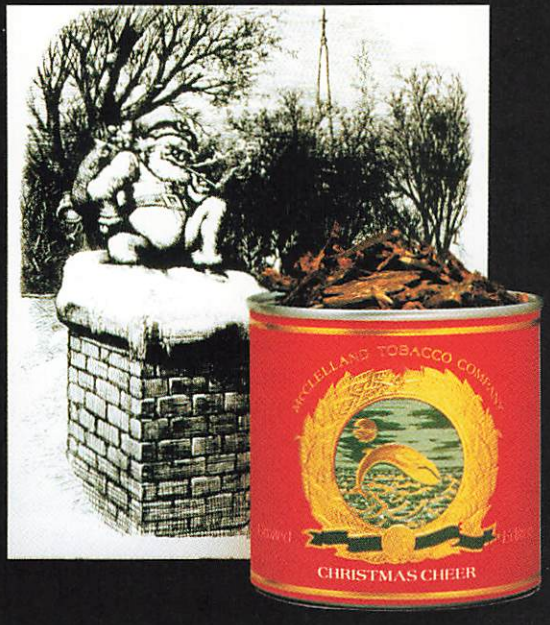

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Four Generations of Pipes

From manufacturing pipes to blending tobacco to running retail shops, Blatter & Blatter of Montreal, Canada, has nearly 100 years of experience in the pipe and tobacco trade

by Chuck Stanion

"My great-grandfather started this business in 1906," says Pierre Blatter as he rings up a sale of pipe tobacco in this busy shop on Kennedy Avenue. "He was one of the pioneers in Canada, opening a pipe factory here in Montreal. At one time they had 70 to 80 employees making pipes for local trade and for export to Europe."

Pierre is a dynamic individual who moves with organized purpose behind the counter, helping customers with an automatic ease as he talks. His brother, Robert, who is Blatter & Blatter's pipemaker, also helps with customers, opening cabinets of Cuban cigars and displays of pipes as browsers ask questions. They both smoke their pipes comfortably as they effortlessly move through the shop with seemingly choreographed precision.

"That original factory," says Robert, "manufactured hundreds of thousands of pipes."

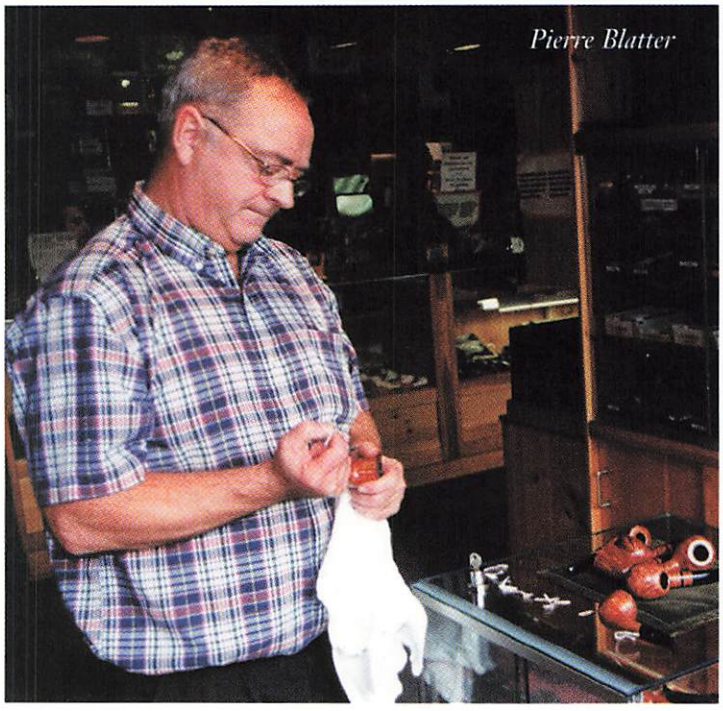
When Frederick George Blatter, the brothers' great-grandfather, arrived in Canada in 1906 with his brother, George, pipemaking was already a family tradition. He had owned a pipe factory in London, then had moved his family to Cape Town, South Africa, after a fire destroyed the London facility. Frederick and George opened another pipe factory and retail stores in Cape Town, but soon decided to move to Montreal.

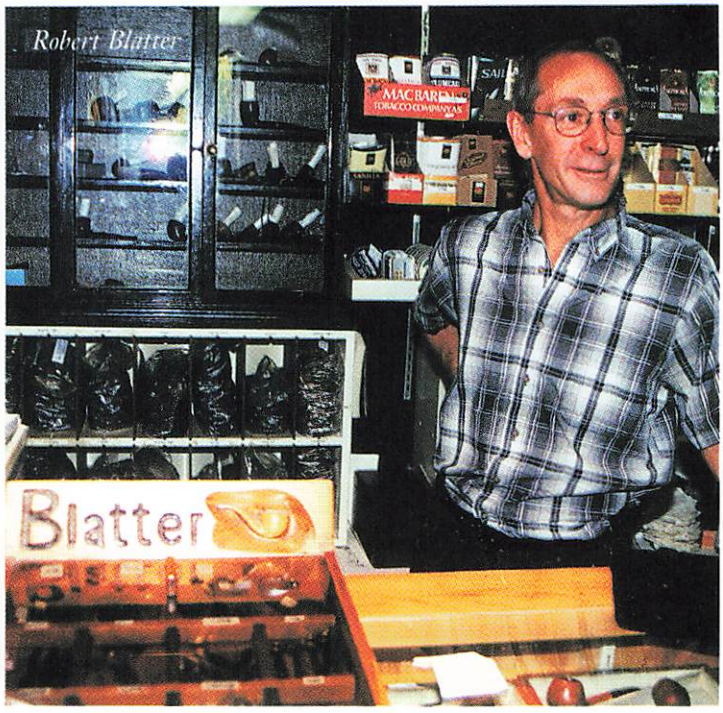
Frederick's son, Ernest, joined his father and uncle in the business in 1907, and the family became very busy with the factory, which was located on the east side of Montreal. Retail shops all across Canada and Europe clamored for Blatter-made pipes. In the 1920s, the Blatters even manufactured Dunhill pipes, stamped with the Canadian patent. "I still have the stamp here in the back," says Robert. "More Dunhill pipes were sold here in Canada in the '20s and '30s than were sold in the United States."

Those were booming times. The Blatters opened five retail shops, all kept busy by the demand for pipes and tobacco. But business became more difficult with the onset of World War II. The pipe trade dwindled with the increasing popularity of cigarettes, and it was difficult to maintain pipe manufacture even for the diminished demand, because raw materials were scarce. For a while during the war, they made pipes with manzanita, a California briar, because Mediterranean briar was nearly impossible to import.

Factory output decreased more and more, until only a very few employees remained. In the mid-'40s, the factory was divided in half, with one side continuing pipe manufacture and the other dedicated to making cigarette tubes for roll-your-own cigarettes. That measure kept the factory going for another 20 years. "But finally," says Pierre, "the factory had to be closed in the late '60s." That must have been a sad event. Not only had that factory been a mainstay of the family business, but it was the place where Pierre's and Robert's father, George Blatter, met their mother, who had been employed in the factory polishing pipes.

"By the time we closed the factory," says Pierre, "there was one pipe shop left on St. Catherine Street, and that's the one


Pierre Blatter



I was working in. That shop was there until about 1970, when we moved here. I worked with my father there, where he worked with his father." Pierre was 16 years old when he started learning the business. He soon discovered that he had more talent for business than for pipemaking. "I learned to make pipes," he says, "but I don't have the talent that my brother has. When Bob joined us, it worked out very well, because I could take care of the business part of the operation and let Bob handle the creativity."

Robert Blatter had been working for the phone company, Bell Canada, as an installer, but was unhappy with the work. In 1967, when George Blatter passed away, Pierre was left to run the shop, but was having a difficult time handling everything, so Robert quit Bell Canada and joined his brother.

"Robert started experimenting with the briar and the machinery," says Pierre, "and he has an awful lot of talent. He picked it up very quickly. Within a year he was making better pipes than the two employees we had at the time."

Watching one of the pipemakers employed by the shop enabled Robert to teach himself the trade. "I would watch him all week," he says. "He had Saturdays off, so I would come in on Saturdays and work on my pipemaking skills, trying to copy his pipes. The first pipe I made was huge; you could have fit an entire regular pipe in its bowl. But a customer bought it, more to encourage me, I think, than anything else. The customer who bought it still has it. I remember it well—it was 1968, and I sold the pipe for $60." Robert laughs at the memory. "My brother told me at the time, 'I think you should start making them a little smaller.'"

When the original pipe factory was built in 1906, it was very difficult to obtain pipemaking machinery. "My great-grandfather and his brother had to make their own machinery," says Robert. "I remember seeing the factory when I was young. They didn't have any specialized machinery except what they could make or modify themselves. Most of the drills I use either came from my great-grandfather or I've made them myself by shaping them on a grinding wheel. It's the easiest way."

"We have old lathes going back to my great-grandfather's days," says Pierre. "So Bob does certain procedures the way they were done 75 or 100 years ago. We use the Old School way of doing it—not mass production. We prefer it that way."

The same techniques and the same machinery used three generations ago are still working well. "There's no doubt," says Robert, "that I'd like to be equipped like they are in some of the larger factories, with hydraulic equipment and specialized machinery. But this is a small place. And we manage. What we have is enough to do the repairs necessary and to make a couple of hundred pipes a year. And I enjoy it. I can't ask for more than that."

While the Blatter & Blatter shop is large enough for the displays, cigar humidors, accessories and counter space necessary for any tobacconist, and is comfortable for the customers, the back room where the pipes are made is remarkably small. That 200 or more pipes a year are made in such a tiny space in the back, behind the counter, is quite impressive. While it is as long as the width of the retail shop, it is narrow and can accommodate only one or two people at a time. But it is large enough for its purpose.

"Because we run a retail business here," says Robert, "we're limited in the amount of time we can spend on a pipe. I cannot justify five hours on the finish alone, as some pipemakers can. So we limit the finishes to completely natural, light-stained, dark-brown-stained, and a few carved finishes. There is no room for sandblasting equipment here, so while we have standard shapes that are sandblasted, they are not sandblasted here. We have friends in France who do the sandblasting on those pipes for us."

Blatter & Blatter pipes are made mainly from Corsican briar, though the recent availability of Algerian briar has made that source interesting. "We're still debating how much Algerian briar we want to use," says Robert. "The blocks are cut much too large, which is fun for making big pipes, but there's a limit."

The logo on each Blatter pipe is a red dot. "Up until 50 years ago," says Pierre, "the logo was a green dot. But the green dot material ran out, so now it's a red dot."

"Actually," says Robert, "the dots are made from knitting needles." ▶

"We have trouble finding them now, though," says Pierre. "We have a good supply that should last for quite a while, but they're getting hard to find. No more plastic knitting needles. Everything seems to be metal now."

About 75 percent of the stems on Blatter pipes are vulcanite, and 25 percent are acrylic. Stems are not hand-cut, but modified blanks. "With acrylic," says Robert, "the tenon is a problem, always fragile to make. So we have Teflon tenons. Cumberland mouthpieces are more expensive and we get 10 or 15 pieces a year, just to have something a little different."

The Blatter brothers conduct a significant amount of business directly with pipe businesses in Saint-Claude, France, with whom they have built very solid relationships. "We find that easier," says Pierre, "than trying to deal with wholesalers in Canada. We buy some pipes, we buy mouthpieces and make our own pipes."

"Every year or two," says Robert, "we take a jaunt over to Saint-Claude. We know all the makers, and when something new comes out we jump on it. We buy product regularly. We can't make pipes in all the different shapes and new materials; we're limited. So we buy Chacom or Butz-Choquin to complement what we have. And the quality is there, without a doubt." The regard that the brothers hold for France and its pipes was reciprocated in 1982, when they were inducted into the prestigious Confrérie des Maîtres-Pipiers de Saint-Claude.

"The beauty of it all," says Pierre, "is that we don't make many pipes here, but each is individually crafted. The Web site helps the business considerably. We sell pipes to folks in Australia, Japan, everywhere, though mostly to the United States. The exchange rate is good for the U.S. sales."

The reasonable price of Blatter pipes has occasionally proved a hindrance. "The pipes we make right here," says Pierre, "with almost no flaws, sell for about $100. We've lost sales over the years because some people judge the quality of the pipe according to the price, and they can't accept that our pipes could be any good at so reasonable a cost. There must be something wrong with them, they reason. But we price our pipes according to our custom and to the market. In Montreal, expensive pipes do not sell very well."

"The reason our pipes are so very reasonably priced," says Robert, "is because we go according to the demand of our customers. It's a good business because it's a personal thing. All our customers are our friends. There's never any pressure here. It's like home—in fact, we spend more time here than at home. You meet so many interesting people over the years, with pipe smokers, especially—you have an affinity with them that you don't find with cigars."

Most of the trade for the shop is local, with only about 10 percent of sales dependent on summer tourism. "Grandfather, father, son," says Pierre. "They've seen previous generations smoke a pipe and they pick it up very naturally. We used to sell maybe 75 percent English pipes, but now it's more like 75 percent French." Pierre has a theory to explain that conversion. "In the 1930s, most of the people in Montreal who had money were English; they were businesspeople, doctors, professionals, and they were pipe smokers. French Canadians started getting better jobs, and the monetary balance shifted. Now the majority of pipe smokers here are French Canadian."

No cigarettes are sold at Blatter & Blatter. "We never sold cigarettes," says Robert. "We don't want to sell cigarettes. That's the way we were brought up. Cigarettes are habit-forming, pipes and cigars are not. You smoke a pipe when you want to, not when you need to." Even in this shop, though, where the proprietors

clearly prefer pipes and are rarely seen not smoking them, pipe sales are secondary to cigars.

About 40 percent of the shop's sales are in pipes, accessories and pipe tobacco, with the remaining 60 percent in cigars. "There's no doubt that the cigar boom helped us," says Pierre. "And there seems to be quite a bit of crossover from cigars to pipes. We see many cigar smokers now buying pipes and enjoying pipe tobacco."

"Pipes are not a fad of any kind, like cigars," says Robert. "You know, cigars went up, they went down; pipes—for our shop, at least—have been very stable for the last 15 years. Sales have been very stable, but they went up a little bit about three years ago. We started selling more pipes, a few expensive pipes, and there has been a lot of demand for pipe tobacco."

The brothers attribute the increase in demand for pipes to a new breed of customer, one who does not want to simply smoke, but to experiment and savor the experience. "People are very curious these days," says Pierre. "They want to try new tobaccos. The demand for better-quality pipes and high-grade tobacco has increased dramatically."

"Accessories are doing well, too," says Robert. "We are selling more pipe racks, pipe tools, tobacco pouches—anything to do with pipes. Those sales have climbed 20 to 30 percent."

"We live in a world of stress," says Pierre. "A lot of people smoke pipes as a result—it's good for them, it calms them down. We must have 30 doctors who come here. Some of them honestly feel that if pipe smoking is done in a moderate, rational way, not to excess, that it is good for you."

Perhaps this increase in interest and demand for Blatter pipes will help motivate a fifth generation of Blatter tobacconists. Pierre's son, Patrick, is learning to make pipes from his Uncle Robert. "Little by little," says Pierre, "Patrick is learning the trade and may soon be making pipes with the Blatter name." It's a name that is synonymous with pipes, and one that seems destined to continue for many more years. *P&T*

Nomenclature

The year is stamped on each Blatter pipe, as well as the number of the pipe made during that year. All pipes are stamped "Blatter, Montreal" and "select grade." About 90 percent of the pipes are stamped with Robert Blatter's signature. Two-dot pipes, with two red dots in the stems, are the highest grade, with perhaps two or three produced per year. These are flawless and usually in a natural finish.

Before Robert Blatter began pipemaking for the shop, only about 1 percent of total production was handmade, because they were made at the factory. The factory pipes were never numbered. Blatter pipes are available in five general categories: Small, Regular, Major, Giant and Handmade. Grades within each category are assigned according to quality and clarity of the briar.

The brothers have many Blatter pipes from the 1930s and subsequent years. "We keep them because they represent history, and because the occasional collector is interested in having one," says Pierre Blatter. These pipes are very classically shaped, with high-quality rubber stems. Interestingly, these older Blatter pipes are not graded according to the quality of the grain. "The wood was not that important in those days," says Robert Blatter. "People didn't care; grain was incidental. The shape was the most important aspect."

For additional information, contact Blatter & Blatter, 365 President Kennedy Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 1J5; visit *www.blatterpipes.com*; e-mail *sales@blatterpipes.com*; fax 514.845.8028; or telephone 514.845.8028.

Closing in on perfection

by Dayton H. Matlick

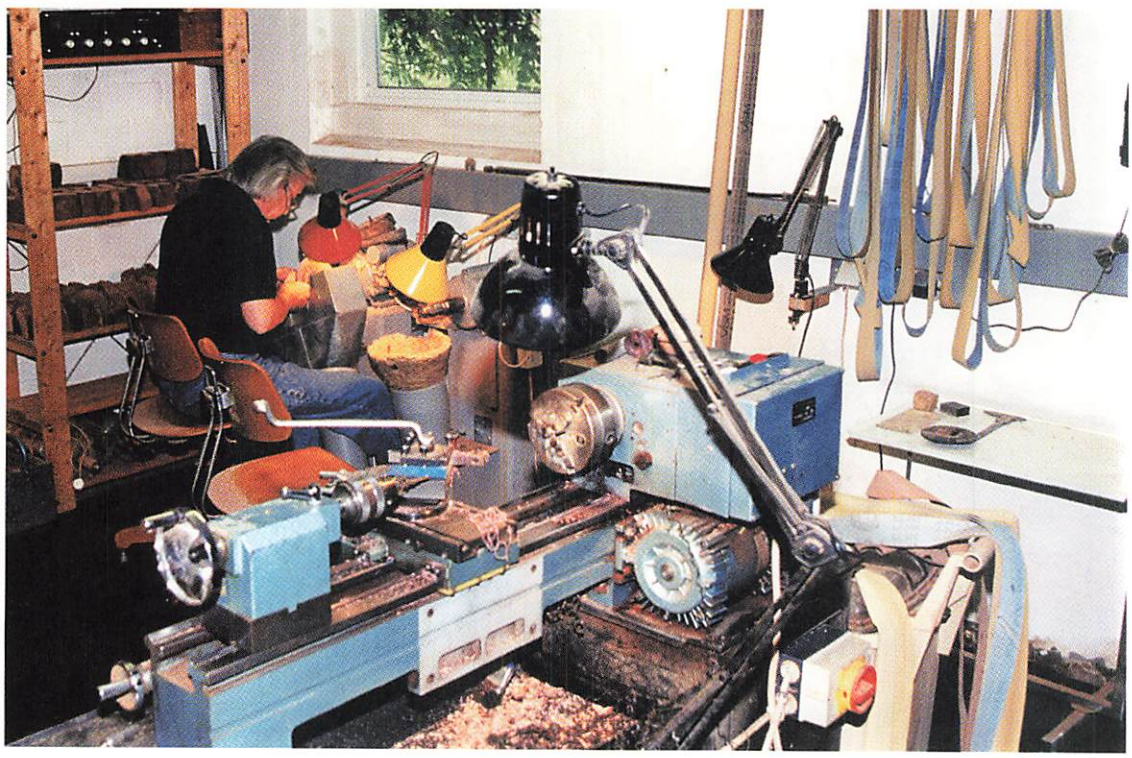
A block of ebauchon is selected for the next pipe. Water is applied sparingly to bring out the grain. When, at last, the shape hidden within the block "emerges," it is drawn onto the block with a black felt-tipped pen, angled to take full advantage of the grain. Swiftly, the pipemaker moves into the creative phases, completely focused, oblivious to everything around him....

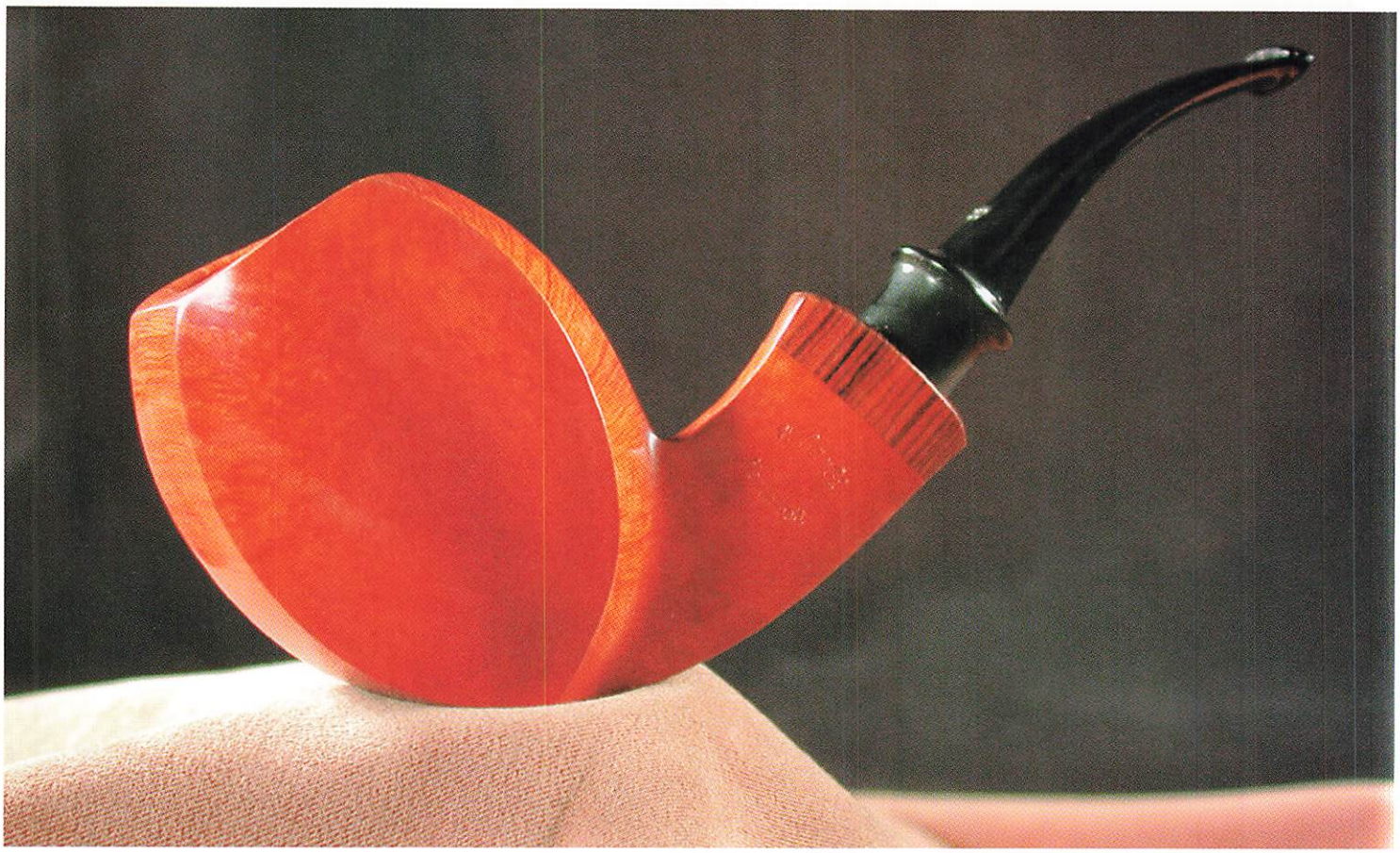
Master pipemaker Rainer Barbi was born in Hannover, Germany, only three years after the end of World War II. In fact, it was so close to the end of the war that he was born in a makeshift hospital, located in a very famous clinic for horses, resulting in good-natured ribbing during his earlier years.

Barbi's father was a mechanical engineer from Hamburg who made machines for a tire company; his mother was an opera singer from Leipzig. From them he inherited both mechanical and artistic talents. And then there was his uncle on his father's side, a successful salesman, who rounded out his background.

For his first 13 years of school, he attended a highly respected school called Christeaneum. The west side of Hamburg had once been occupied by the Danes and the school had been created for the Danish population in the area. It is famous for its

Barbi inherited mechanical and artistic talents from his parents.





Barbi bought a pipemaking kit and spent his whole vacation in Switzerland carving his own pipe.

humanistic curriculum, including classic studies, such as Greek.

After finishing the equivalent of high school in the United States, it came time to plan for a university education. That's when the arguments started. His father had assumed all along that he would be trained as an engineer; Barbi, on the other hand, had his heart set on becoming an architect. The only solution was compromise. He enrolled in a four-year program in law.

Like many young men of his day, Barbi was a heavy cigarette smoker during his teens and early 20s—heavy enough that the cigarettes created health problems, causing him to quit. After a year off, he decided to start smoking again, this time choosing pipes for his pleasure. He found a shop in Hamburg—the best one in town that specialized in pipes and tobaccos. It sold pipes by famous pipemakers such as Anne Julie and Rasmussen, but they were far beyond the means of a student. He could only look in wonder at the beautiful forms.

It took him about a month to decide on his first pipe. It was a bent Savinelli with a large bowl, a 622KS Oscar, which he still has. It smoked great, but he picked the wrong tobacco. It was harsh and made his early experiments unpleasant, to say the least. A switch in tobaccos and a new garnet-grained Barling 5105 dramatically improved his pleasure. The Barling was a big billiard with a large bowl.

Although he enjoyed his pipes, he kept thinking of the beautiful high-grade pipes in the shop. During Christmas vacation of his second year of law school, he bought a pipemaking kit and spent his whole vacation in Switzerland huddled in front of the fire carving his own pipe design. Toward the latter part of his vacation, just as he was about to finish and was dreaming of the smoking experiences to come, he discovered a large sand pit in the briar. Disappointed—even grieving—he threw the pipe into the fire and went back to school.

Undaunted, he worked on several more kits with better results. His early efforts were quite fancy. Others were more classic in shape and design. Then one day, the owner of the pipe shop told Barbi that he had a booth at the Hamburg Fair, a well-attended event. He offered to let Barbi sell his pipes in the booth without charge. Barbi jumped at the chance.

Quite early in the 10-day event, Barbi had sold all of the pipes he had created. Every evening he and two friends would carve like mad to create enough pipes for the next day. By the end of the show, the store owner invited Barbi to make pipes for sale in the store and to go to other fairs in Germany with him. His favorite shapes during this two-year period were billiards and classic bents.

Suddenly, the four-year course of law was almost up and the final examination loomed before him. It was decision time. He knew it wasn't in his nature to be able to do both. The success he had in making pipes and the sense of satisfaction that came

from the creative moments won out. The test was never taken and, without really knowing what he was getting into, Barbi devoted himself to making pipes.

His first stop was at a bank, where he borrowed the U.S. equivalent of $20,000. Some was set aside for the purchase of disc sanders, belt sanders, drills, lathes and other tools necessary to produce pipes commercially. The rest would buy the needed briar.

The next stop was Greece. After all, with his schooling in Greek, that should be a snap. Unfortunately, he found that the Greek language had evolved dramatically since the days of Virgil, Aristotle, Plato and Euripides. His list of names of briar cutters proved to be useless because of communication problems. Then, at the company operated by the Varella family, he met one of the brothers who had studied medicine in Germany. His education in briar began. He stayed for a year and a half while he learned where to find the best briar, how to boil it, how to cut it. He even had a dream of making pipes in Greece, but his plans and high level of nervous energy didn't fit with the Mediterranean way of life.

Back in Germany, most pipes are made in large factories. Those companies not only discouraged him, but made it next to impossible to see

Barbi talked to pipemakers wherever he could find them, while experimenting to develop a style of his own.

"For the best smoke, the briar must be porous."

— *Rainer Barbi*

how their operations were run. Resourcefully, he talked to pipemakers wherever he could find them, while experimenting to develop a style of his own—a style that is neither Danish nor classic, but all Barbi. Remembering his difficulties learning how to make pipes, Barbi now teaches courses for aspiring pipemakers.

Today, Barbi lives in the small village of Worth, about 18 miles (30 kilometers) east of Hamburg. Located in a beautiful rural setting, the village has "about 150 people and 700 cows." His home is in the second floor of the house the farmer built when he retired. Today, the property is not being farmed. In fact, the concrete-walled and -floored parlor where the cows were kept and milked is his workshop.

The workshop is only about 150 feet from the house. It measures about 360 square feet and is snug even in the cold, northern Germany winters. The milkroom across the front serves as an airlock to keep the workshop cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

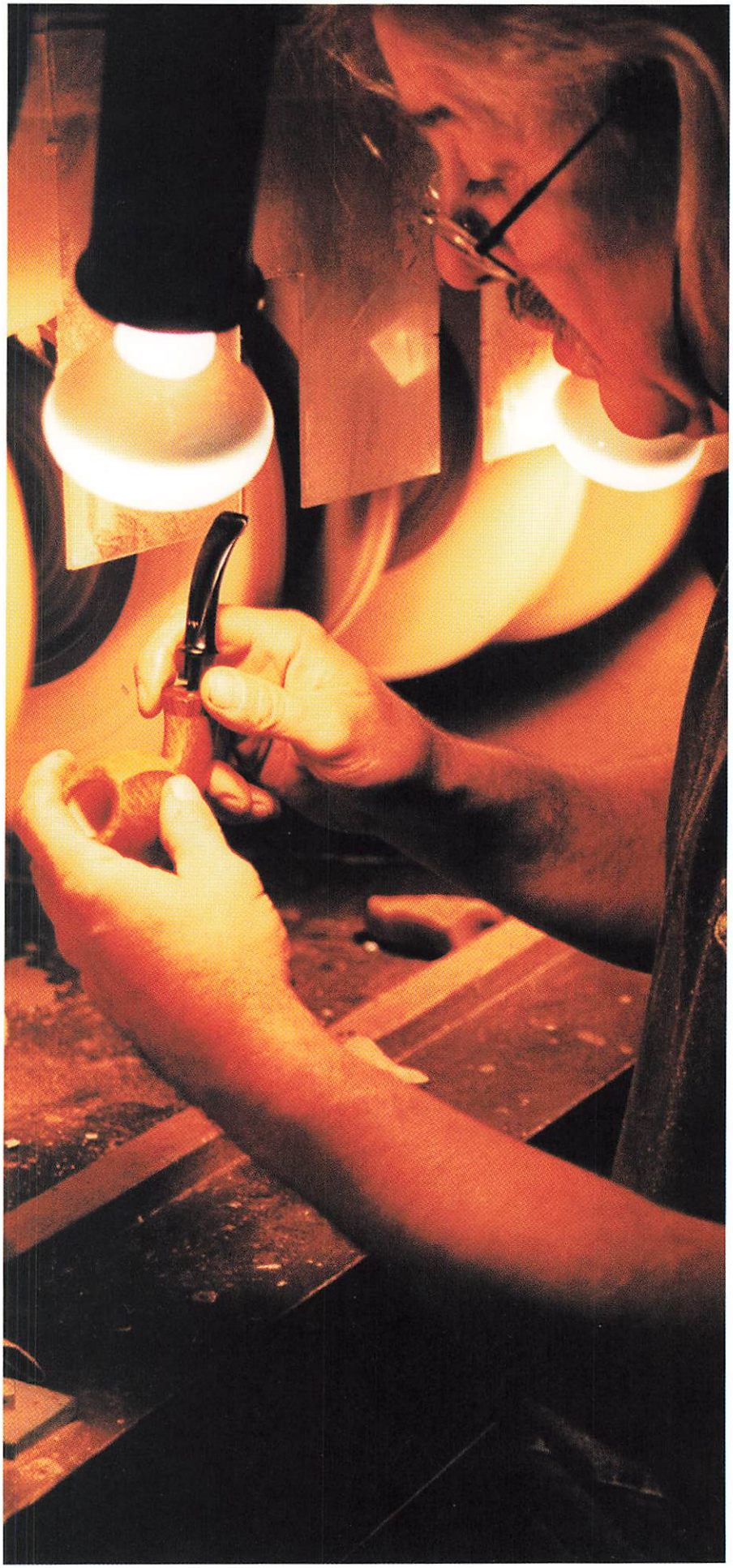
"From my first five years, I learned to make pipes," says Barbi. "I can say now, they weren't very good quality. Now I've been making pipes for more than 25 years. That resulted in a lot of pipes, but none of them were perfect.

"Even today, there is always something at least a little bit away from perfection.

"Pipemaking is a game for me. In each piece of briar I look for the perfect style and grain. I think I will never find all of the elements in place at the same time. When I finish each pipe, I say to myself, 'No, no...change this and that the next time.' When I make the perfect pipe, I will know I am dead.

"My pipes aren't Danish, Italian or English. They are my own style. And that style changes as the taste of pipe smokers changes. Sometimes there is more flow, and at other times the pipes are more fancy and ornamental. I make classic pipes, but not English classic. Those are limited to what machines can do. Also, I prefer smooth lines and pay special attention to the smooth curve that runs from the bowl to the tip of the mouthpiece. In that, I am probably more Italian.

"The most important thing for me in making pipes is not only the style, it's also the perfection—to make the tobacco chamber, the smoke channel, the bit and everything else just the right way. The preferred shapes may change, but my goal is to make each pipe as perfect as I can. Do the air channel and the tobacco chamber meet exactly at the bottom and exactly in the center? Do the stem and mouthpiece join perfectly?"



Barbi believes strongly that the briar and the mouthpiece should be exactly the same humidity when they are mated. To accomplish this, he uses a hot light—1,000 watts—for 10 minutes after the tenon is finished to make sure the air moisture and the wood moisture are the same, about 50 percent. He also is a strong believer in using a 4 mm smoke channel. If a pipe has a larger-than-usual bowl, he will increase the channel to 4.2 mm. He also uses a 2.5 mm hole in the mouthpiece to match his larger bore.

Barbi now buys his briar in Taggia in northern Italy near Genoa. Each fall he goes there to buy more. He keeps a two- to three-year supply on hand at all times.

"I look for size, color, grain and weight. Briar from Greece is redder; from Sardinia, more yellow; from Morocco, more light brown; from Corsica, more light pink. But the weight of the briar is critically important. The block must be light, not heavy. For the best smoke, the briar must be porous. Because I make all my pipes without using filling, it takes me two to three blocks of briar for each finished pipe. At $18 to $30 a block, that is a big investment in inventory."

In contrast to some pipemakers, making pipes is a battle for Barbi. His attention doesn't waver. In fact, if the building fell down around him, he probably wouldn't notice until he took a break. And when he breaks, he smokes cigarettes, fast and furiously, until he dives back into the challenge of the shape hidden in that block of briar; the challenge of changing the image in his head to match the changing grain; the challenge of adjusting to work through an unexpected sand pit; the challenge of coming just a little bit closer to perfection with each pipe he makes. *P&T*

Nomenclature

Quality, from lowest grade to highest: CC, CB, CA/ BC, BB, BA/ AC, AB, AA. The highest grades (in order) are A0, A1, A2.

Dates: First letter is month. Second is year, as follows:

Month: January=Z; February=Y; March=X; April=W; May=V; June=U; July=T; August=S; September=R; October=P; November= N; December=M.

Year: The new numbering system started in 1997 with the letter A. Therefore, 2000 is D.

(Example: A pipe stamped AA RD would be the highest A-grade, made in September 2000.)

Barbi pipes use a number of different stains, but he reserves the lightest stains for his finest pipes. Only oil and wax are used as a finish.

All Barbi pipes have a raised "RB" logo on the stem.

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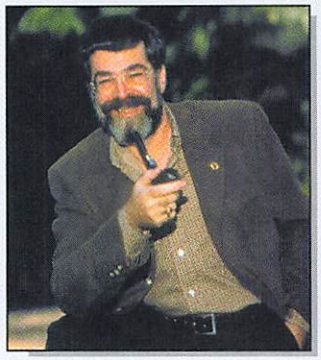

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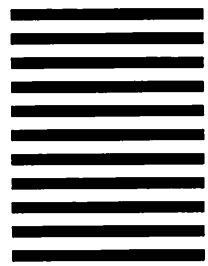

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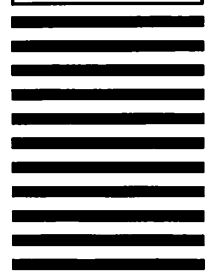

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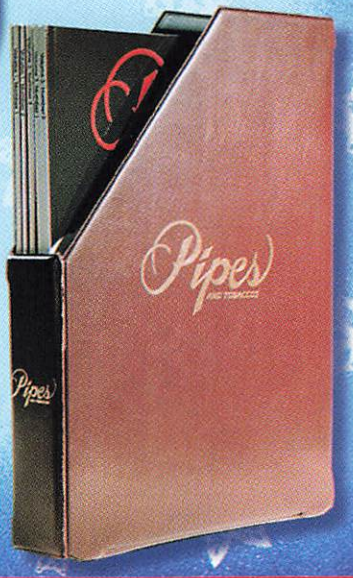

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Tribute tobacco

Tribute, a special blend made by Gregory L. Pease to commemorate the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, has recently been introduced. Distributed to retailers nationwide by Cornell & Diehl, Tribute contains red, lemon and stoved Virginias, Perique and toasted Cavendish tobaccos.

Tribute retails for $12 per two-ounce tin, and Cornell & Diehl will pledge $10 of each two-ounce tin sold to the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance for the postsecondary educations of children and spouses of those killed or permanently disabled in the attacks. Cornell & Diehl hopes to have 5,000 orders by Dec. 1. For more information, call Cornell & Diehl at 800.433.0080.

Neerup Pipes by Peder Jeppesen

After working 20 years with the best pipemakers in Denmark, Peder Jeppesen has taken his collective experience, combined it with his artistic creativity and love for nature and produced pipes of excellent quality, design, finish and value. Jeppesen incorporates custom forged silver work and exotic wood bands into many of his designs to create pipes of quiet sophistication. To learn more about Peder Jeppesen and his Neerup pipes, visit *www.pipesworld.com*.

Tinsky Christmas Pipe 2001

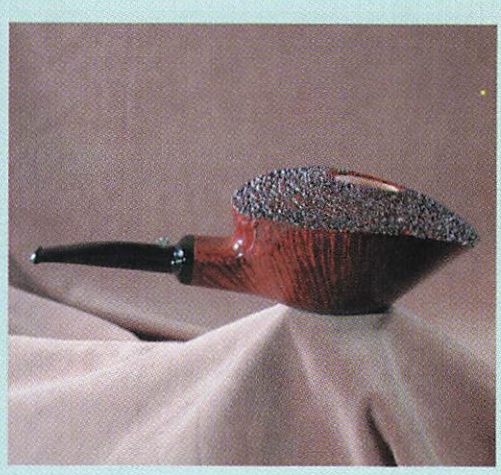
Once again, pipemaker Mark Tinsky has produced a new Christmas pipe that should be eagerly anticipated by collectors. This year's pipe weighs 1.5 ounces, is 2.125 inches tall, 6 inches long and has a 1.75-inch circumference at the ring. The bowl is slightly conical, starting at 0.75 inch at the bottom and finishing a little larger at the top. It will easily pass a pipe cleaner and sells for $130 and higher. For additional information, contact Mark Tinsky, American Smoking Pipe Co., HC 88, Box 223, Pocono Lake, PA 18347; e-mail *mt@epix.net*; or visit *www.AmSmoke.com*.

Sherlock Holmes humidor

This white ceramic jar holds approximately one pound of tobacco. Trimmed in gold glaze, each handmade piece is individually numbered, with no more than 2,000 jars being produced. The bust of the world-famous detective adorns the top of the jar. Proceeds fund the nonprofit organization, Pipe Able, for pipe-smoking men with disabilities. Available at any Pipe Able sponsoring tobacconist or online at *www.pipeable.org*. For additional information, contact Pipe Able, 1210 S. Bascom Ave., Suite 114, San Jose, CA 95128; telephone 408.286.4664; fax 408.286.6278; or e-mail *chuckmaster@pipeable.org*.

Larry Roush pipes

Larry Roush has returned to pipemaking after several years' sabbatical. Highly regarded as some of the very finest American pipes made, Roush pipes are once again available and, if possible, are even better than before. Available in a variety of sizes and in smooth or rusticated finishes, Roush pipes are especially noted for the excellence of the silver work incorporated into many of the designs. For additional information, contact Larry Roush at 419.872.9037 or *agauguy@aol.com*.



Pipes by L'Anatra

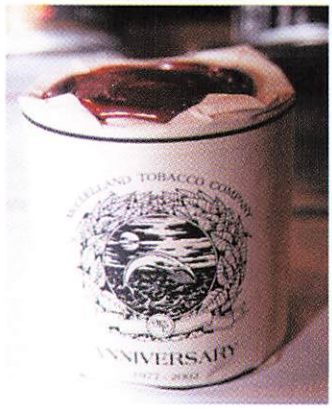
L'Anatra pipes have a wide variety of pipe shapes and sizes that will suit any pipe smoker. These fine Italian pipes are available at tobacco shops and distributed by Cristom Import and Export. For the name of the shop near you, contact Cristom at 813.269.0921.

Leather from Safferling

Bertram Safferling studied design and engineering at the National Academy of Cultural Arts in Stuttgart, Germany. Since 1981, he has used his critical eye and creativity to produce pipes, jewelry and leatherwork. Safferling recently introduced a new leather pouch that will hold four pipes. Designed by Safferling and handmade at a traditional German saddlery, the pouch is made using only the finest available leather and natural vegetable dyes. It will comfortably hold four pipes, a tamper and pipe cleaners. For additional information, contact Briar Inc., 1346 Mystic Seaport Drive, Fenton, MO 63026; telephone 636.225.3126; or visit *www.safferlingpipes.com*.

New from McClelland

Anniversary, a new Virginia and Latakia blend, commemorates 25 years of operation for the McClelland Tobacco Co. Also newly available is the Premium Aroma line, featuring premium aromatic blends. Available at fine tobacco shops everywhere.



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BONES *Malibu (310) 456-8324* • OLD KNICKERBOCKERS *Menlo Park (650) 327-7473* • TELFORD'S *Mill Valley (415) 388-0440* • CASTRO'S *Mountain View (650) 962-1550* • ROMEO ET JULIETTE *Newport Beach (949) 261-7722* • PIEDMONT TOB *Oakland (510) 652-7473* • MAXAMAR *Orange (714) 633-3000* • PALM DESERT TOB *Palm Desert (760) 340-1954* • OLD KNICKERBOCKERS *Palo Alto (650) 328-7473* • BROADWAY TOB *Red Wood City (650) 261-9657* • OLD HAVANA *Roseville (916) 786-9999* • BRIAR PATCH *Sacramento (916) 929-8965* • TOWER PIPES *Sacramento (916) 443-8466* • LUDWIG'S *San Anselmo (415) 456-1820* • FUMAR CIGARS *San Diego (619) 270-9227* • LIBERTY TOB *San Diego (858) 292-1772* • HUMIDOR *San Francisco (415) 563-5181* • SHERLOCK'S HAVEN *San Francisco (415) 362-1405* • MISSION PIPE *San Jose (408) 293-5144* • SANTA BARBARA *Santa Barbara (805) 963-1979* • CIGAR WAREHOUSE *Sherman Oaks (818) 784-1391* • BAY BRIAR SHOPPE *Soquel (831) 462-1965* • VENDOME *Toluca Lake (818) 766-9593* • LIL' HAVANA *Vacaville (707) 447-8678* • LINDA'S PIPES & TOB *Vista (760) 758-9881* • GREEN JUG *Woodland Hills (818) 887-9463* • SIERRA CIGAR *Woodland Hills (818) 883-1217* **COLORADO:** STAG TOB *Colorado Springs (719) 633-0669* • HAVANA'S *Denver (303) 355-2003* • EDWARD'S *Englewood (303) 781-7662* • BARLOW'S *Lafayette (303) 926-1002* • NICKLE CIGAR *Littleton (303) 904-8760* • ORIGINAL CIGAR *Littleton (303) 904-7650* • ORIGINAL CIGAR *Westminster (303) 430-7446* **CONNECTICUT:** ARCADE CIG *Fairfield (203) 259-1994* • GOLDEN LEAF *Fairfield (203) 334-6810* • CONNECTICUT VALLEY *Hazardville (860) 763-4655* • EXECUTIVE CIG *Monroe (203) 452-9154* • STOGIES *Naugatuck (203) 729-3031* • CIGAR HOUSE *New Haven (203) 387-4995* • OWL SHOP *New Haven (203) 624-3250* • EXCEPTIONAL CIG *Ridgefield (203) 431-1220* • CASUAL CIG *South Norwalk (203) 854-9594* • KAP *Stamford (203) 359-0740* • WOODEN INDIAN *Watertown (860) 945-1250* **D.C.:** GEORGETOWN *Washington (202) 338-5100* • W. CURTIS DRAPER *Washington (202) 638-2555* **DELAWARE:** REHOBOTH *Rehoboth (302) 226-3151* • THREE SONS *Wilmington (302) 652-1445* • TOB VILLAGE *Wilmington (302) 478-5075* **FLORIDA:** BONITA SMOKE *Bonita Springs (941) 495-9296* • SMOKER'S GALLERY *Boynton Beach (561) 736-5533* • CAPE SMOKE *Cape Coral (941) 549-8809* • FAMOUS CIG *Clearwater (727) 796-2442* • CIGARS *Cocoa Beach (321) 868-0338* • BILL'S PIPE *Coral Gables (305) 444-1764* • TINDER BOX *Datona Beach (904) 253-0708* • HARBOR CIG *Destin (850) 650-3111* • DOWNTOWN TOB *Ft. Meyers (941) 337-4662* • LANCASTER'S *Ft. Walton Beach (850) 243-9040* • CIGAR SHOPPE *Grayton Beach (850) 231-0522* • CIGAR BOX *Islamorado (305) 517-9099* • EDWARD'S *Jacksonville (904) 396-7990* • TOB MERCHANTS *Longwood (407) 767-0050* • GOVERNORS *Miami (305) 232-5355* • KING'S TREASURE *Miami (305) 374-5593* • MACABI *Miami (305) 412-0720* • MACABI *Miami (305) 644-9934* • SMOKE SHOP *Naples (941) 435-1862* • ART'S PREM CIG *Orlando (407) 895-9772* • TINDER BOX *Orlando (407) 248-7788* • EAST-SIDE CIG *Oviedo (407) 365-6665* • GRAND RESERVE *Pensacola (850) 429-0078* • H.K.H. *Pensacola (850) 433-7733* • CIG BY JUAN *Pompano Beach (954) 984-8939* • LE CIGAR *Sarasota (941) 362-4427* • EDWARD'S *Tampa (813) 872-0723* • PIPE DEN *Vero Beach (561) 569-1154* • CIGAR ROOM *Venice (941) 485-0837* • CIGARZ *Winter Park (407) 647-2427* **GEORGIA:** CIGAR MERCH *Alpharetta (770) 552-1942* • TOBACCO PLUS *Alpharetta (678) 339-0803* • HUMIDOR *Atlanta (770) 393-1542* • ROYAL CIG *Atlanta (404) 329-0088* • TINDER BOX *Atlanta (404) 231-9853* • TOB LOFT *Atlanta (404) 467-0000* • CIGAR DEPOT *Douglasville (770) 947-1412* • CLUBHOUSE CIG *Duluth (770) 495-9330* • CIGAR MERCH *Dunwoody (770) 671-1777* • CIGAR & PIPE *Fayetteville (770) 461-6544* • OLD SOUTH TOB *Macon (912) 477-5426* • PREMIUM TOB *Marietta (770) 579-8280* • LITTLE TASTE *Marietta (770) 422-0142* • TOB WORLD *Marietta (678) 290-1255* • GEORGIA CIG *Newnan (770) 252-3626* • GEORGIA CIG *Riverdale (770) 472-8909* • CUBANA CIG *Rome (706) 295-0546* • YE OLE TOB *Savannah (912) 691-0807* • CIGAR VILLA *Smyrna (770) 433-1243* • ISLAND CIGAR *St. Simons Island (912) 634-0770* • SMOKERS PARADISE *Suwanee (770) 814-2155* • UP IN SMOKE *Tucker (770) 414-0033* **HAWAII:** CIGAR EMPORIUM *Pearl City (808) 484-5757* **IOWA:** DAVID'S *Des Moines (515) 278-8701* **IDAHO:** STURMAN'S *Boise (208) 338-3225* **ILLINOIS:** IWAN RIES *Chicago (312) 372-1306* • JACK SCHWARTZ *Chicago (312) 782-7898* • OLD CHICAGO *Chicago (312) 236-9771* • UP DOWN *Chicago (312) 337-8025* • OLD CHICAGO *Highland Park (847) 831-3310* • LAGRANGE *LaGrange (708) 579-5101* • SMOKERS HAVEN *Orland Park (708) 633-8331* • BURNING AMBITIONS *Palatine (847) 358-0200* • HABANA CIGAR *Schaumburg (847) 517-4444* • CIGAR KING *Skokie (847) 675-2447* • 8 TO 8 TOB *Villa Park (630) 993-1234* • CIGARY *Wilmette (847) 256-7676* **INDIANA:** THEODORE JAMES *Dyer (219) 864-8800* • RIEGELS *Ft. Wayne (219) 424-1429* • CIGAR BOX *Indianapolis (317) 841-9992* • MFG TOB *Indianapolis (317) 334-9700* • GOLDEN LEAF *Michigan City (219) 872-9692* **KANSAS:** DIEBEL'S *Overland Park (913) 663-0123* • PREMIUM CIG *Overland Park (913) 642-9500* • STOGIES *Topeka (785) 357-7229* **KENTUCKY:** TOBACCO MART *Henderson (812) 424-8521* • KREMER'S *Louisville (502) 584-3332* • OXMOOR *Louisville (502) 426-4706* **LOUISIANA:** ARABI CIG *Chalmette (504) 277-0000* • CIGAR MERCH *Lafayette (318) 233-9611* • PIPER'S HAVEN *Lafayette (337) 235-4757* • DON JUAN CIG *Metairie (504) 733-1400* • CAFE HAVANA *New Orleans (504) 569-9006* • EPITOME *New Orleans (504) 569-0019* • MAYAN IMPORT *New Orleans (504) 269-9000* **MASSACHUSETTS:** GLOUCESTER STREET *Boston (617) 424-1000* • L.J. PERETTI *Boston (617) 482-0218* • TUFTS TOB *East Boston (617) 561-8888* • PLEASANT SMOKE *Malden (781) 321-3593* • CIRCLE CIG *Middleboro (508) 947-8803* • AURORA BOREALIS *Northampton (413) 585-9533* • RED LION *Salem (978) 745-2050* • VICTORY CIG *Sudbury (978) 443-4040* • MASTERS TOB *West Springfield (413) 787-0002* **MARYLAND:** ANNAPOLIS CIG *Annapolis (410) 295-7400* • DECKER'S *Bel Air (410) 879-4400* • J.B. SIMS *Bethesda (301) 656-7123* • KINGS CONTRIVANCE *Columbia (410) 290-7860* • EASTON CIG *Easton (410) 770-5084* • DAVIDUS *Ellicott City (410) 480-4810* • DAVIDUS *Frederick (888) 422-2621* • TINDER BOX *Gaithersburg (301) 947-4667* • MARLEY TOB *Glen Burnie (410) 590-2565* • OCEAN CITY *Ocean City (410) 289-1630* • SENOR CIG *Ocean City (410) 524-2069* • DAVIDUS *Olney (301) 260-0786* • DAVIDUS *Potomac (301) 983-6646* • HUMIDOR CIG *Timonium (410) 666-3213* • FADER'S *Towson (410) 685-5511* • TINDER BOX *Waldorf (301) 374-9100* • WESTMINSTER CIG *Westminster (410) 876-4786* **MICHIGAN:** LITTLE HAVANA *West Bloomfield (248) 539-0190* • MAISON EDWARDS *Ann Arbor (734) 662-4145* • CHURCHILL'S *Birmingham (248) 647-4555* • H & I SMOKE *Canton (734) 844-3003* • MR. HABANO'S *Clinton Township (810) 412-3929* • SMOKERS & MORE *Farmington Hills (248) 442-2499* • HOSTETTER'S *Grand Haven (616) 842-3920* • WINE BARREL *Livonia (734) 522-9463* • CIGAR BOX *Milford (248) 685-3893* • TRADER TOMS *Northville (248) 348-8333* • VINTAGE WINE *Orchard Lake (248) 626-3235* • CHURCHILLS *Petoskey (231) 348-5545* • CHURCHILLS *Rochester Hills (248) 652-1335* • LIL HAVANA *Rochester Hills (248) 375-5455* • EMBASSY *Roseville (810) 771-7880* • SMOKER'S DISC *Royal Oak (248) 585-9599* • HUMIDOR ONE *Southfield (248) 356-4600* • CHURCHILLS *St. Claire Shores (810) 775-3181* • TROY TOB *Troy (248) 528-8018* **MINNESOTA:** GOLDEN LEAF *Minneapolis (612) 824-1867* • JONATHON FIELDING *St. Paul (651) 489-7504* • STOGIES *St. Paul (651) 222-8700* **MISSOURI:** HAVANA CIG *Arnold (636) 282-2975* • NOSTALGIA *Columbia (573) 874-1950* • FEERICK'S *Joplin (417) 624-5532* • DIEBEL'S *Kansas City (816) 931-2988* • FIDEL'S *Kansas City (816) 561-6505* **NORTH CAROLINA:** PIPES LTD *Asheville (828) 328-8002* • HUMIDOR TOB *Charlotte (704) 334-3449* • McCRANIE'S *Charlotte (704) 523-8554* • TINDER BOX *Charlotte (704) 366-5164* • CARVING TREE *Durham (919) 416-9775* • PIPE & PINT *Greensboro (336) 218-8610* • SIR TOMS *Hendersonville (828) 697-7753* • TOB OF RALEIGH *Raleigh (919) 954-0020* • MATCHBOX *Southern Pines (910) 944-7665* • DAVIS & SON *Wilmington (910) 791-6688* • GARNERS *Winston-Salem (336) 725-7611* • PIPES ETC *Winston-Salem (336) 723-1269* **NEBRASKA:** TED'S TOB *Lincoln (402) 484-5571* **NEW HAMPSHIRE:** CASTRO'S *Nashua (603) 881-7703* • TWO GUYS *Salem (603) 898-5322* • GOLD LEAF *Seabrook (603) 474-7744* **NEW JERSEY:** OLDE TYME *Beach Haven (609) 492-1600* • GROUCHO'S *Cherry Hill (856) 795-1982* • JOHN DAVID *Edison (732) 494-8333* • SMOKERS WORLD *Englewood (201) 567-1305* • SMOKIN *Ft. Lee (201) 944-0234* • SMOKE STACK *Hackensack (201) 498-0332* • CIGAR EXCHANGE *Manalapan (732) 617-9611* • HAVANA'S *Matawan (732) 583-3433* • CIGAR ALLEY *Merchantville (856) 663-9190* • SMOKERY *Metuchen (732) 548-1130* • TASTE OF CUBA *Princeton (609) 683-8988* • WINDSOR CIG *Princeton JCT (609) 936-0600* • SIR PUFFS *Springfield (973) 218-0462* • JERSEY CIG *Tom's River (732) 349-6875* • THEE TOBACCO STORE *Verona (973) 857-2266* • WILLIAM'S CONTINENTAL *Vineland (609) 692-8034* **NEW MEXICO:** SMOKER'S DEPOT *Albuquerque (505) 797-9688* • SANTA FE CIG *Santa Fe (505) 982-1044* • SANTA FE CIG *Santa Fe (505) 995-1142* **NEVADA:** CARSON CIG *Carson City (775) 884-4402* • HAVANA CIG *Las Vegas (702) 732-2828* • TOBACCO ROAD *Las Vegas (702) 435-8511* • CARSON CIG *Reno (702) 324-3683* • TINDER BOX *Reno (775) 826-2680* • LAKE TAHOE CIG *Stateline (775) 588-1677* **NEW YORK:** HABANA PREMIUM *Albany (518) 482-1351* • HUDSON RIVER CIG *Gold Spring (845) 265-5015* • A & D TOB *East Northport (631) 499-2330* • STOGIES & TALES *Farmingdale (516) 753-2596* • MAXI'S *Floral Park (718) 343-5000* • TOB KING *Greenvale (516) 484-1875* • HUNTINGTON HUMIDOR *Huntington (516) 423-8599* • MARX BROTHERS *Huntington (516) 427-2624* • HAVANA HARRY'S *Lancaster (716) 685-9901* • SMOKER'S GIFT HARBOR *Mt. Kisco (914) 666-2648* • JIM'S SMOKE *Mt. Sinai (631) 331-4307* • ARNOLD'S *New York (212) 697-1477* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 962-3355* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 692-9680* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 888-1015* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 385-4632* • CIGAR INN *New York (212) 717-7403* • DAVIDOFF *New York (212) 751-9060* • UNITED *Rhinebeck (914) 876-7185* • SMOKIN' SAMS *Saratoga (518) 587-6450* • BRYANT & FRIEND *Sayville (631) 218-0121* • KIEFFER'S *Syracuse (315) 475-3988* • MAIN STREET CIG *Tarrytown (914) 366-4381* • TINDER BOX *Williamsville (716) 689-2914* **OHIO:** CINCINNATI SMOKE *Cincinnati (513) 533-4999* • STRAUS TOB *Cincinnati (513) 621-3388* • TINDER BOX *Cincinnati (513) 671-8966* • TINDER BOX *Cincinnati (513) 891-3380* • COUSIN'S *Cleveland (216) 781-9390* • BARCLAY TOB *Columbus (614) 764-0300* • BURNING LEAF *Columbus (614) 443-5323* • HUMIDOR PLUS *Columbus (614) 891-9483* • PIPES & PLEASURES *Columbus (614) 235-6422* • PORT ROYAL *Columbus (614) 280-0886* • SMOKER'S HAVEN *Columbus (614) 538-9534* • TINDER BOX *Columbus (614) 276-2904* • TINDER BOX *Columbus (614) 475-7872* • OAKWOOD KETTERING *Dayton (937) 298-1456* • STOGIES & STIX *Dublin (614) 336-9590* • TINDER BOX *Dublin (614) 761-3120* • CORDY'S *Girard (330) 545-1573* • HILLIARD TOB *Hilliard (614) 777-8545* • TOBACCO ROAD *Mansfield (419) 522-6218* • CIGAR AFFAIR *Maumee (419) 891-0109* • PORT ROYAL *Solon (440) 914-0500* • PORT ROYAL *Toledo (419) 537-1491* **OKLAHOMA:** R & K *Oklahoma City (405) 752-2772* • TOB EXCHANGE *Oklahoma City (405) 843-1688* • FOGUE & BATES *Tulsa (918) 488-0818* • VINTAGE CIG *Tulsa (918) 250-8999* **OREGON:** CASCADE *Portland (503) 775-5885* • RICH'S *Portland (503) 228-1700* **PENNSYLVANIA:** CLASSIC CIG *Doylestown (215) 348-2880* • J.M. CIGARS *Exton (610) 363-3063* • COUNTY SEAT *Fairless Hills (215) 269-6900* • LIGHT'N UP *Glenmoore (610) 458-6221* • LITTLE HABANA *Harrisburg (717) 939-3811* • PIPE DEN *Harrisburg (717) 564-8425* • RAE'S TOB *Harrisburg (717) 233-1218* • TINDER BOX *Harrisburg (717) 232-7166* • TINDER BOX *Haverford (610) 896-4511* • REBEL VALLEY *Horsham (215) 328-0500* • INTERNATIONAL TOB *King Of Prussia (610) 878-9190* • TINDER BOX *Lancaster (717) 560-4277* • JOHN DAVID *Langhorn (215) 757-7706* • MR. STOGY'S *Morrisville (215) 736-0820* • TASTE OF CUBA *New Hope (215) 862-1122* • BLACK CAT *Philadelphia (215) 563-9850* • FRANK JERNIGANS *Pittsburgh (412) 531-5881* • POOR RICHARDS *Pittsburgh (412) 281-1133* • EL FUMADOR *Sewickley (412) 741-1300* • SPECIALTY *Sharon (330) 544-7900* • CIGARS UNLIMITED *Spring House (215) 643-2575* • D.C. TOBACCO *State College (814) 238-5299* • M.A.D. CIG *Wayne (610) 971-2500* • G & G CIG *West Chester (610) 436-9999* • EL HUMIDOR *Wilkes-Barre (570) 822-5544* • CHURCHILL CIG *Yardley (215) 369-0966* **RHODE ISLAND:** REGENCY CIG *East Greenwich (401) 884-7665* • JOYAL *West Warwick (401) 822-0536* **SOUTH CAROLINA:** SMOKING LAMP *Charleston (843) 577-7339* • TOB MERCHANT *Columbia (803) 749-5499* • BODA PIPES *Greenville (864) 242-1545* • TOWNE CENTRE *Mt. Pleasant (843) 216-0373* • TINDER BOX *Myrtle Beach (843) 272-2336* • NICK'S CIG *N. 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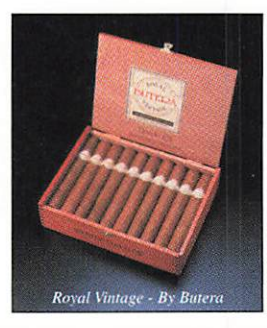

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King Charles - For Butera

Kingfisher - By Butera

BUTERA

TRIAL BY FIRE

by William Serad

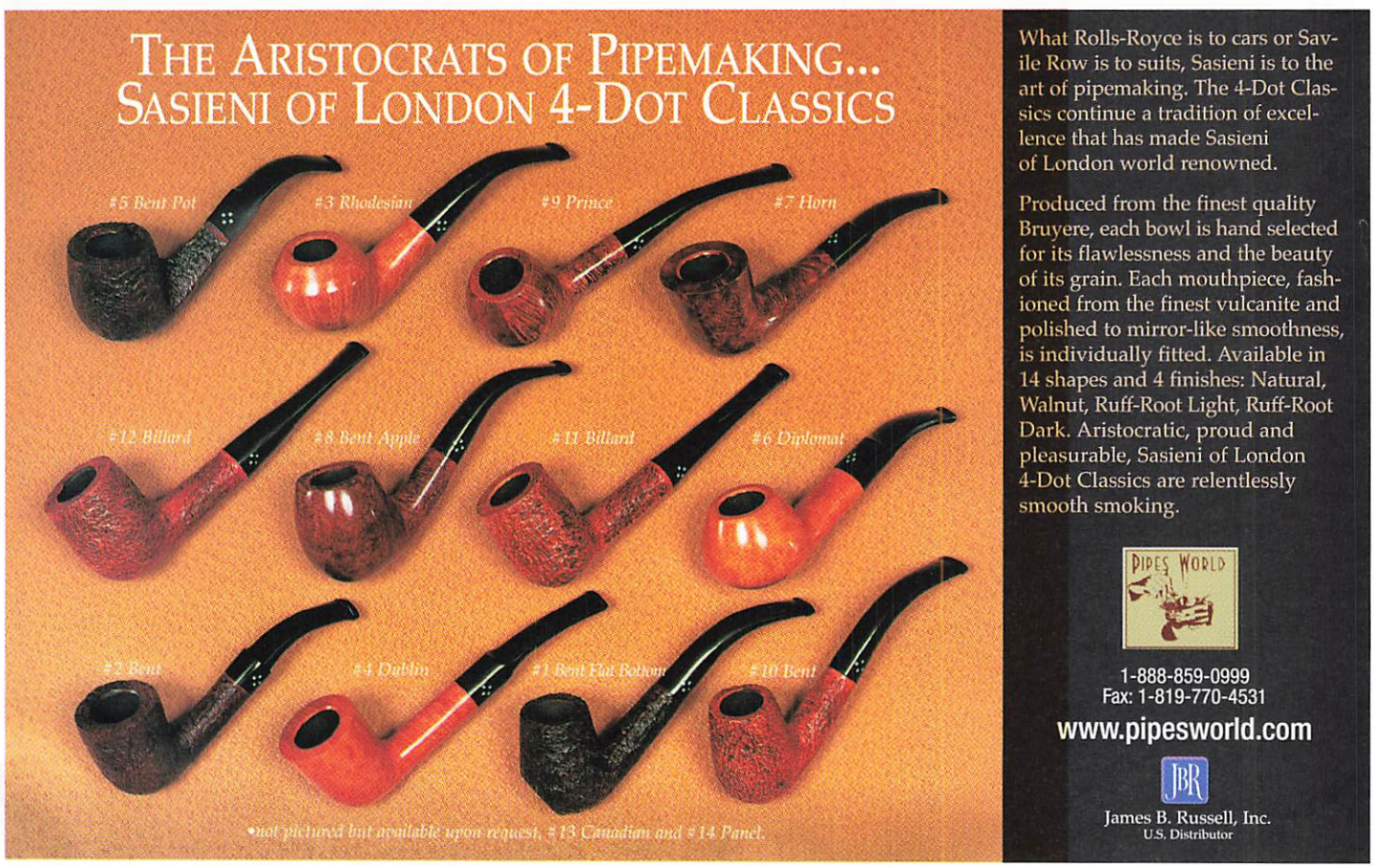
The White Spot

Ah, the White Spot, the symbol of excellence, elegance, élan, endurance and all the other "e" superlatives you can think of. Images of white ties and tails, Britain when the last century was new, tweeds and hedgerows and all things loved by anglophiles come to the fore. I speak of Dunhill—to many, the best of men's furnishings, cigars, pipes and tobaccos. I have puffed away with all of these blends over the years, and fond memories come alive with some of them, just some of them.

There is always the issue with old blends and old companies (or old anything, for that matter) of whether they seem the same as in the thrilling days of yesteryear. For Dunhill, I would say it does. Quality is not the issue at all, as the standards remain as high as Everest; it really is one of taste. Dunhill presents the entire imaginable range of English blends, and if you can't find it here (or at least something darned close), then you don't like English blends. If one is a little off your preferences, you can have them adjust it in London and have your own entry in the My Mixture series. The aromatics are eccentric. In general, the entire line is broad and deep. No blends are lightweights here, even among those with the appellation "mild." The blends simply don't run shallow. An interesting aspect of all of them is that they are essentially the same in all sizes and shapes of pipes, something one almost never finds true. So read on, and try a few classics....

Royal Yacht (aromatic)

On opening the tin, you might think that you have purchased tea—but no, it really is tobacco. On smelling it, you might again think of tea—but no, it really is tobacco. On smoking it, you might wish you had packed your pipe with tea—but no, this really is tobacco. Starting with sweet (not sweetened) lemon and bronze Virginias, and adding heavier, cooler Virginias, this is flavored, and I must say that it has a grand aroma. I got similar results with Virginias by adding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Drambuie or Irish Mist, and the leaf turned a similar color, but I can't say what Dunhill used. Royal Yacht is OK in social circles aroma-wise, but these days, nothing is ever *really* OK. This packs well and lights easily, and burns like the devil for me, regardless of pipe and humidity level. I found it irritating over time, and the flavor faded through a bowl from barely passable to something as friendly as Winston Churchill's bulldog. Inexplicably, this is used as a blending ingredient in some of the My Mixture series available in London. I have not tried it to this end, and prognosticate no loss. Pass this by.

Three Year Matured Virginia (aromatic!)

This was a great shock. I expected something like a matured Virginia, and I suppose under the surface, that is what's here. It is very dark and rich. But open the tin and WHAM!—plums, berries and fruity things leap out at you. This smelled remarkably familiar, but I could not figure out why. It has something about it like strudel, nothing like candy. As a Virginia, this is pretty good, and it is exceptionally cool and biteless. If you smoke low-grade, fruity, burley-based Black Cav, this is a definite step up, probably 42 steps up. It leaves the walls of the pipe clean, and the palate is not occluded with residual stuff. The fruit stays present, but is not strident as one might expect. As a change of pace or a dessert blend for the confirmed Virginia fancier, this would do quite well. It occupies a unique place, and should be given a spin. It might even do as a different blending ingredient. You should try this at least once in your life.

Light Flake (aromatic)

Once again, a surprise meets the nostrils upon opening the tin. I thought this would be a pale, matured Virginia flake, and it is that. But it is flavored—I might even say scented—in that strange British style favored by no one I know. It is not a weak blend, and the tin aroma is varied, from elements of vanilla or chocolate (but they are not what're there) through straight tobacco (ah, if it only were). On lighting, I had a moment when it reminded me of Mixture 79, but in that upscale Dunhill way. It does remove one's ability to taste subtlety. I can't say I liked this at all, and the worst part is that the flavor hangs around for hours after a bowl. It is remarkably cool, but that is not why I like a pipe now and again.

Durbar (English)

Long absent from the American scene, I'm glad this is back. Similar in principle to 965, this is a Virginia Cavendish base with Orientals and Latakia. Dunhill could have built a blending reputation on this alone, friends, because it has it all. The tobacco is very dark in the tin, so one might assume a strong and Latakia-burdened smoke. It is perfectly balanced, beguiling and subtle all the way down, wafting sweet cirrus clouds of Orientals and Latakia around your head. It is unflinching in carrying out its duty to please, and is good all day and any time. Cool, clean, stimulating to the palate, a marvel of the blender's art, Durbar is highly recommended.

My Mixture 965 (English)

Old Mr. Alfred himself smoked this rich blend. I have noted that some people call this "My Mixture," but there are about a bazillion blends in the books of Dunhill. This one is number 965 in the books, and it is usually referred to by number. This is both deep and wide, and has height, too. If England had a Texas, that is where 965 would be smoked. It is a huge blend, bursting with flavor. Small Latakia leaves, Macedonian and Brown Cavendish make up the blend, similar to Durbar but very different in proportions and effect. It is generally dark, with few flashes of blond. I used to smoke this, but fell away from it many years ago. It tastes the same to me, but I found that I

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could easily push it to have an edge and become unpleasantly hot. There is no British reserve here, but more of a pugnacious quality that I did not appreciate. I think I got away from 965 because it is too big and bruising, and certainly lacks the variability and delicacy I appreciate. Some people live on this, but it has lost its charm for me.

Elizabethan Mixture (natural)

Elizabethan Mixture is composed of leaf that was available from the Colonies (that's us) during the reign of Elizabeth I. It consists of various Virginias pressed and aged, and it has Perique in a quantity I find deficient. A nice round and full flavor provides the fundament here, but the Perique is of insufficient quantity to carry the blend. It is smooth and nutty, an exceptionally fine concoction. But it is also a bit boring, like a stuffy retired barrister. It burns down to a clean, gray ash, and has many assets, but I couldn't get excited about it. Very nice, but not my cup of tea; perhaps my tastes are a bit jaded and require too much excitement. Hmmm, maybe I should mix this with 965?

Early Morning Pipe (English)

As the first pipe of the day, don't think this is thin or stringy. It is a fully and appropriately spacious blend of Orientals, Bright and Red Virginias, some Latakia, all stoved together. The stoving has removed any edges, and this is a wonderful, nutty and honest smoke that is quite satisfying. A clean blend, the ash is pale, the puffing is cool and you are ready for the next bowl of the day. But don't move on to the next weight division in the Dunhill line too soon. Have another Early Morning Pipe, maybe into the early afternoon. Recommended.

Standard Mixture Mild and Medium (English)

The Medium version of Standard is indeed the most classic of classic English blends. It is, of course, recommended as such. It is the standard against which all English blends may be judged. Cool, with tobacco from East Carolina and Georgia, and excellent Turkish leaf, it has just the right contribution of Latakia. The base leaf is toasted lightly with the Orientals before the Latakia is added, which has a salutary effect. It lights well, burns well, smells great as only English blends can, and is simply wonderful. But even more wonderful to me is the Mild version. Lighter in Turkish and Latakia, and with a pronounced note of golden Virginias, this has an extraordinary flavor, refined and yet with character. It is clearly a member of the landed gentry, and deliciously satisfying. Highly recommended.

London Mixture

London Mixture is the very definition of mellow in English blends. As usual, it is soft, clean, fragrant and cool, an exceptional blend in all aspects. A medium-cut that in the tin has more pungency than Standard Mixture, in the bowl and aflame is round and jolly as John Bull himself.

If this had more weight, it would be a Balkan, but it is by no means a lightweight. While large and full, it maintains its civility, and is a great late afternoon bowl over a newspaper for a few moments of contemplation. A true classic and recommended.

The Apéritif

Should you happen to be a fancier of Oriental leaf, this blend would prove to be most satisfactory. Virginia, Latakia and Cavendish it may have, but it is the Turkish that defines its essence and shows its character. Pungent in the tin, the aroma is strong from the brown-to-black leaf. The room aroma is similar, and the pungency remains to the nose and the palate. It is cool, and the ash is variegated gray to black. The Apéritif is a slow smoke, so even a small bowl lasts a long time, and one would not like to rush it.

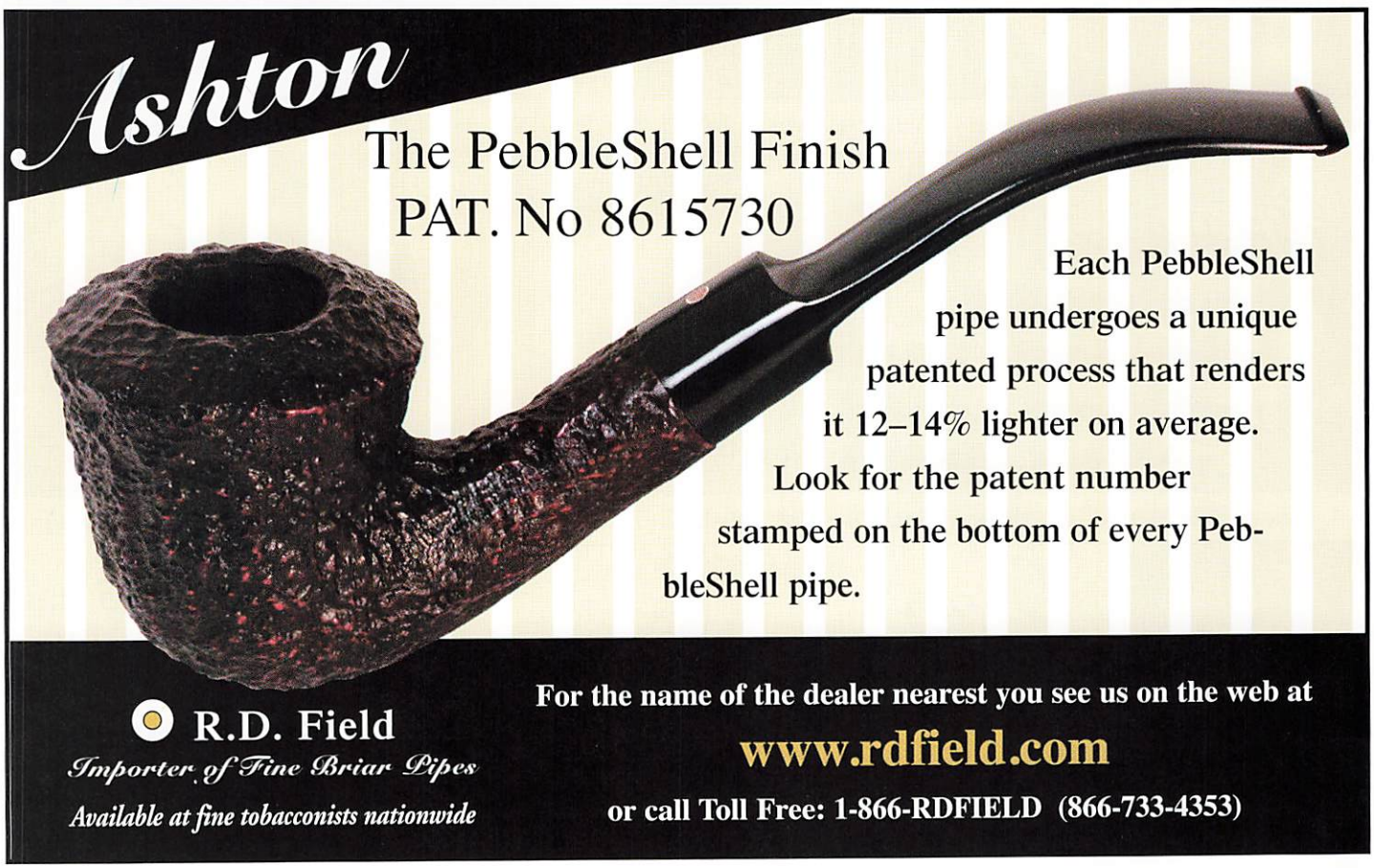
I happen to like Turkish leaf, so this was delicious to me, though it might be a bit heavy to some. Still, I recommend it to those Turkish fans out there.

Nightcap

Heaviest of the Dunhill line, this is loaded with Latakia. It is American leaf with small-leaved Turkish, and just prior to packing, some Perique is added. It doesn't look like that much Latakia is in the blend, but the tin aroma is definitively dominated by the Latakia. In fact, I don't get much variation to the Latakia while smoking it. If you like Latakia, this is a manifest thrust of it. The Perique is unnoticeable to me, while the other leaf is miserly in contribution. Exceptionally cool and slow burning, it is a languid and exotic smoke, but remains just a few degrees above or below the Latakia line it lays.

This is *not* an all-day smoke. It is very good in its way, so Latakia addicts rejoice: I recommend this to you.

Blends in Brief: *From Solani, a new aromatic in the line: Red Label Blend 131, an entry with Old Belt Virginias, Burleys, and Black Cavendish topped with a tropical aroma and a touch of single-malt Scotch whiskey, recommended if you favor ultralight aromatics. Also from Solani, Yellow Label Blend 633, a Virginia flake with Perique, very straight tobacco character, sweetly nutty and cool. From Reiner, a must-try: Golden Label Long Golden Flake, sweet but not the least bit cloying, cool and complex, with a long flake of golden Virginia, white Burley, Orientals and Brown Cavendish; absolutely exceptional and highly recommended.*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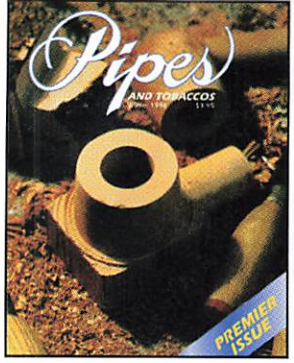

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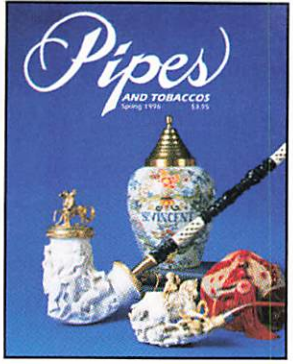

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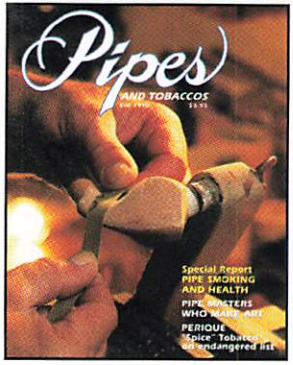

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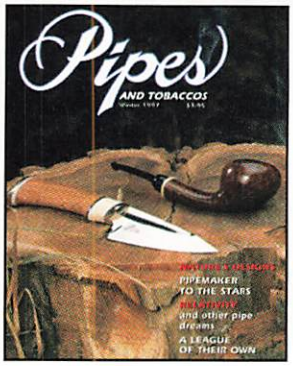

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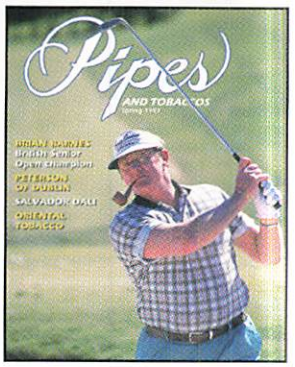

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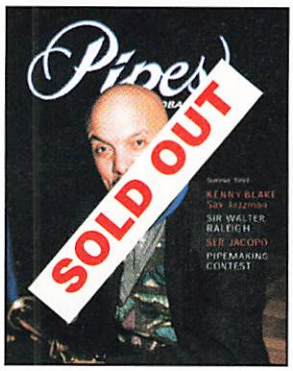

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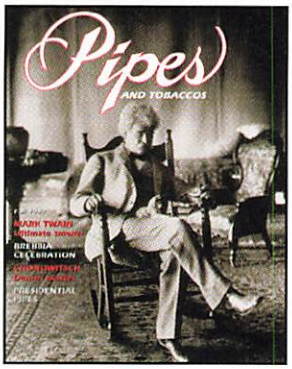

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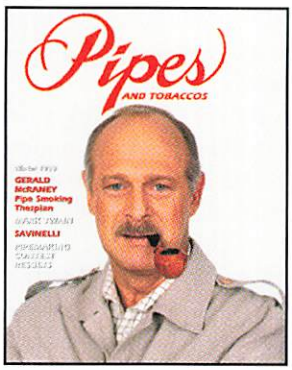

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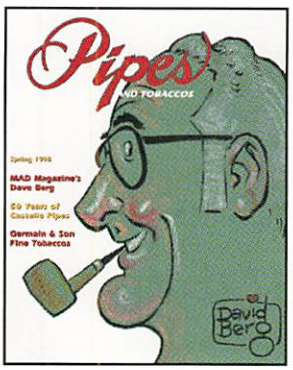

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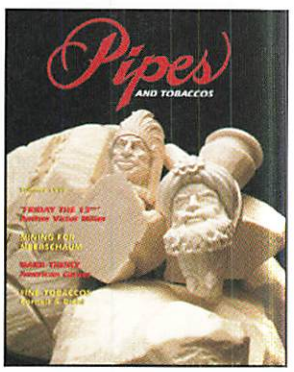

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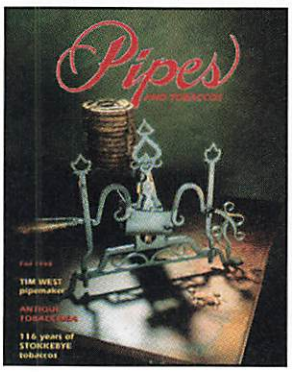

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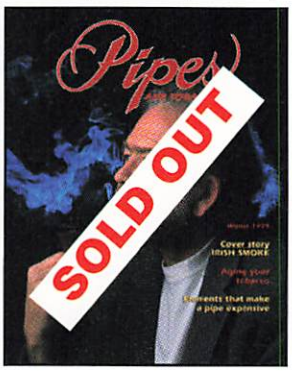

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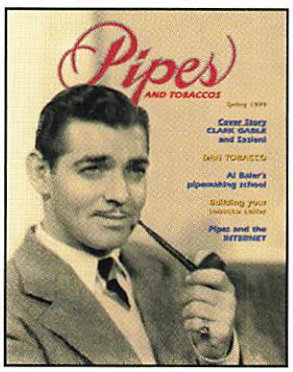

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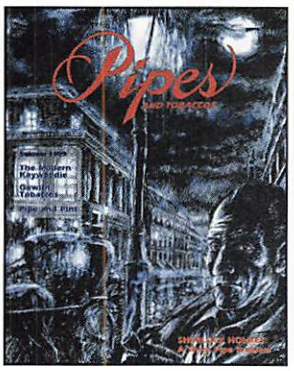

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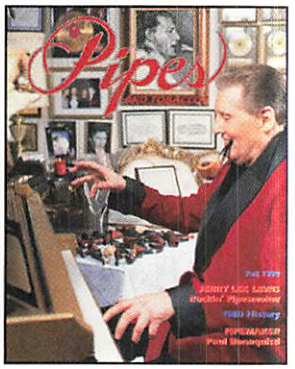

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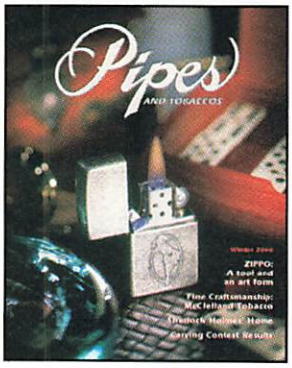

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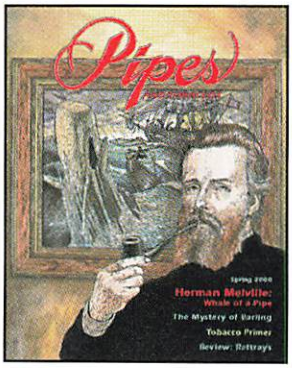

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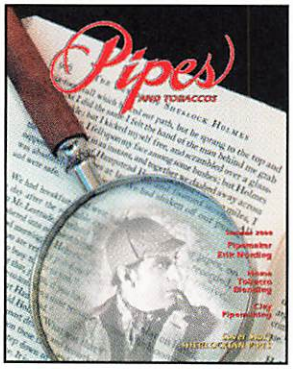

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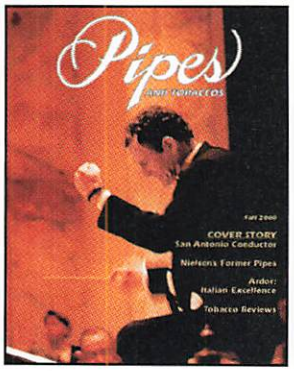

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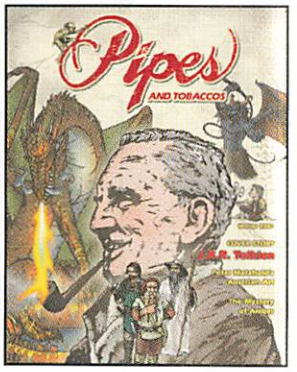

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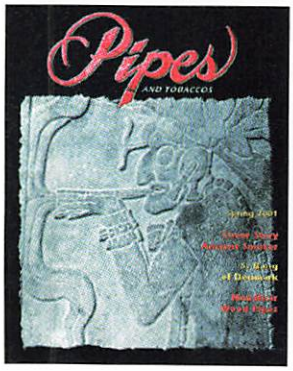

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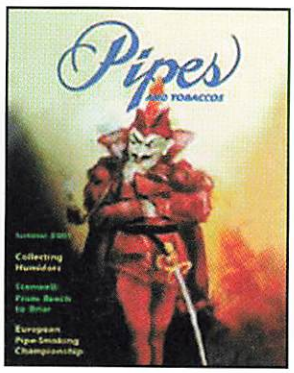

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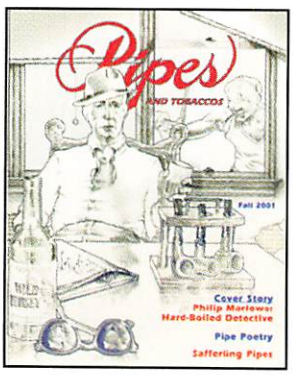

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Pipes AND TOBACCOS

Pipecarving contest

Amateur and professional carvers from around the world submit pipes of stunning quality

Never has the word "Wow!" been uttered so often or with such enthusiasm as at the Richmond pipe show this year, when attendees examined the approximately 100 pipes that had been entered in the *P&T* pipecarving contest. Significantly, many people commented that the Amateur entries were as impressive as the Professional entries. The depth of creativity, the dedication to detail and the sheer investment of time was evident to all.

A terrific assortment of personalities was revealed in the pipes entered. From fantastically detailed figural pipes to whimsical fantasy pipes to conservative traditional shapes, each entry reflected the individuality of its maker.

Because several of the pipes were somewhat fragile, we decided not to invite casual passersby to handle and disassemble the pipes. During the show, attendees voted on creativity of design and visual appeal. The pipes were numbered, without the names of the makers, except in the case of some professionals who included their usual logos and stampings.

To assure the safety of the pipes, the examination of engineering and execution, as well as of all other aspects of the finished pipes, took place the evening before, in a controlled environment. A panel of 30 expert pipemakers and collectors were provided all the time they needed to evaluate the details of each pipe. The two categories of votes were combined by a point system to ascertain the winning entries.

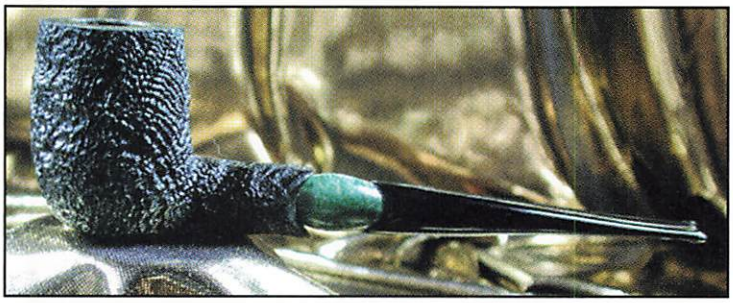
It was a difficult task. Some of the judges took as much as an hour to vote. Most were astonished by the quality of pipes made by people they had never heard of. "Where has this guy been," said one judge as he turned one of the amateur entries over in his hands, "and why isn't he a professional?" We suspect that many of the amateurs who entered the contest will indeed soon be turning professional. Certainly those who entered the contest and attended the Richmond show were sought out by people who saw and liked their entries. Many of the pipes entered were sold after the show and represented first sales for many talented new pipemakers.

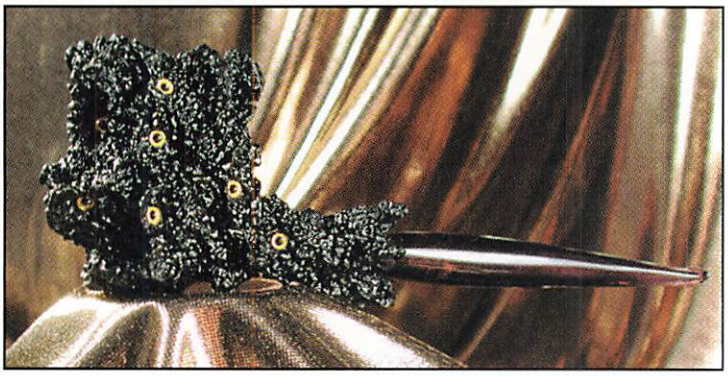
When we originally announced this contest, we stated that only the winning pipes would be photographically represented when the results were announced. However, we were inundated with requests that we show as many of the pipes as possible. Entrants who could not attend the show were curious about the other pipes entered. Most were enthusiastic about having their pipes shown on these pages. We unfortunately cannot include every pipe entered because of limited space, but we feel that this is a good representation. The photos cannot do justice to the beauty and workmanship of the pipes. Two dimensions cannot convey the creativity that is so evident when examining these pipes in person.

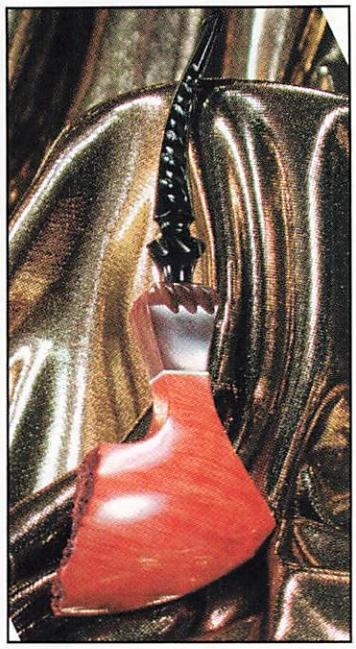
Three First Place prizes were awarded in the Professional category. The winners, in alphabetical order: Walt Cannoy of Winter Haven, Florida; Tom Eltang of Denmark; and Michael Lindner of Auburn Hills, Michigan. Each of them will receive full-page ads in this magazine to help publicize their excellent work. We'll all be seeing the ads in next year's issues of *P&T*, and we hope that the added exposure will prove advantageous to the winners.

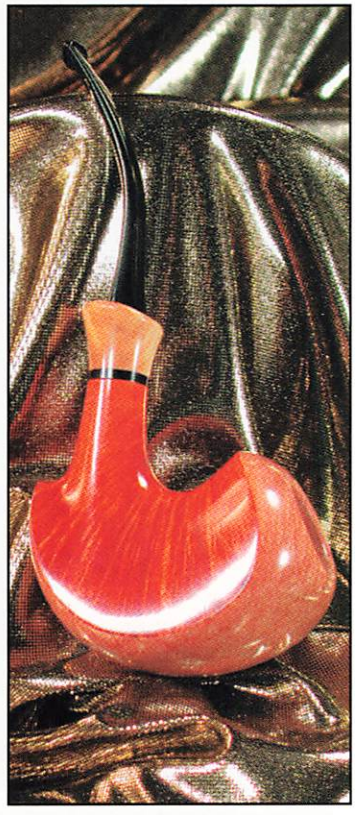
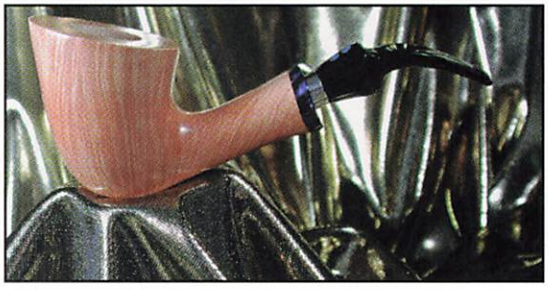
The amateurs won cash prizes, and we know those will go to good use. First Place went to Martin Steinthaler of Austria, Second Place to Brian Ruthenberg of Fort Gratiot, Michigan, and Third Place to Paul Tatum of Mocksville, North Carolina. Brian Ruthenberg said he intended to use his prize money to buy briar so he can make more pipes. We look forward to seeing more from all our entrants.

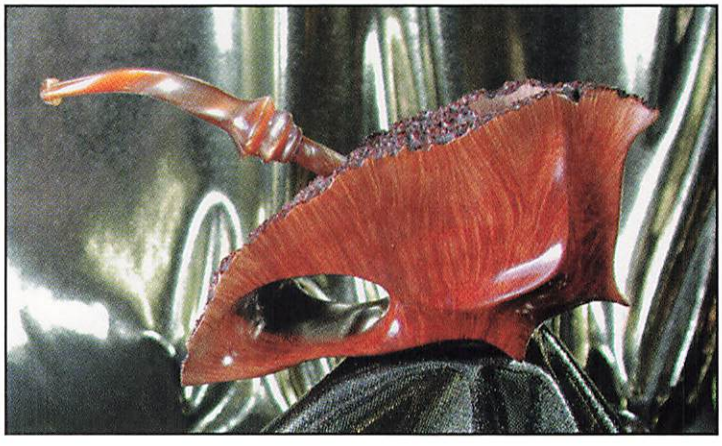
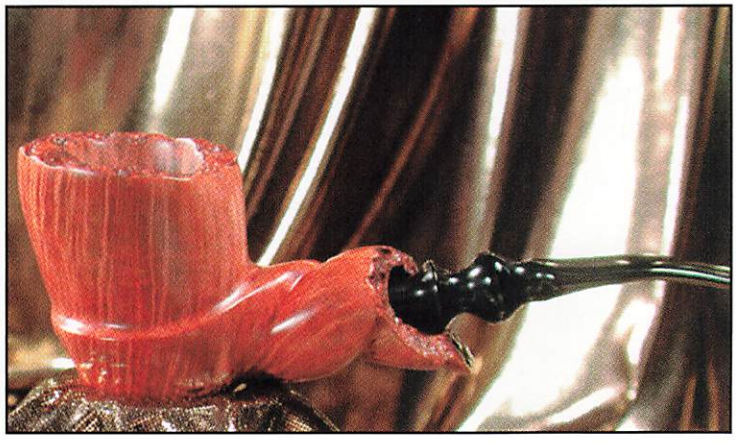
That brings us to next year's contest. But we're departing from the carving scene once again to allow more of our readers to participate. Next year, the *P&T* competition will be for coloring meerschaum pipes. Yes, we're talking about coloring by smoking them, not with other means. We'll be offering special contest pipes, provided by C.A.O. International at less than cost (but there will still be a fee to defray the investment—probably $20), so that everyone can start on an even playing field. Six months' smoking time will be allotted for the coloring. The details for the competition will be provided in our next issue, including such tips on coloring as the best tobaccos and smoking techniques for the purpose. So be prepared. We all like to smoke, and here's a chance to do so in a leisurely competition to beautify our pipes. Watch for all the information you'll need in our Spring 2002 issue. *P&T*



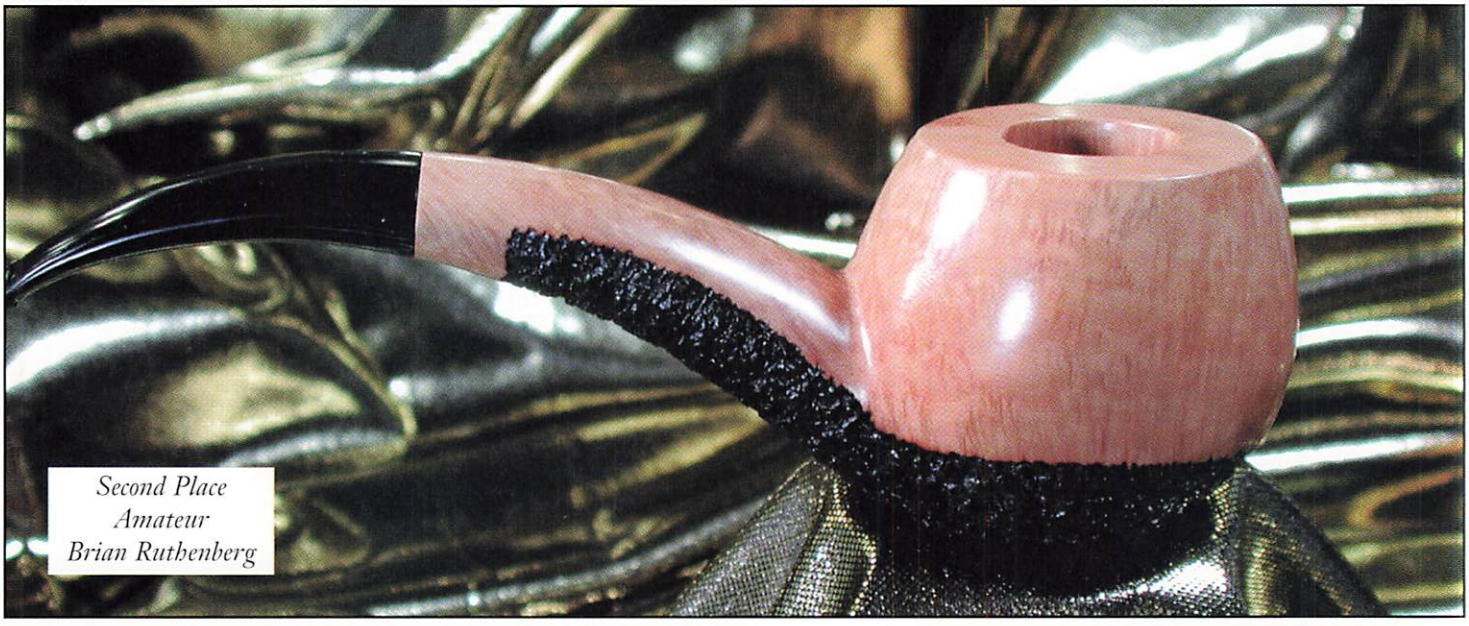




First Place
Amateur
Martin Steinthaler



Second Place
Amateur
Brian Ruthenberg

Third Place
Amateur
Paul Tatum

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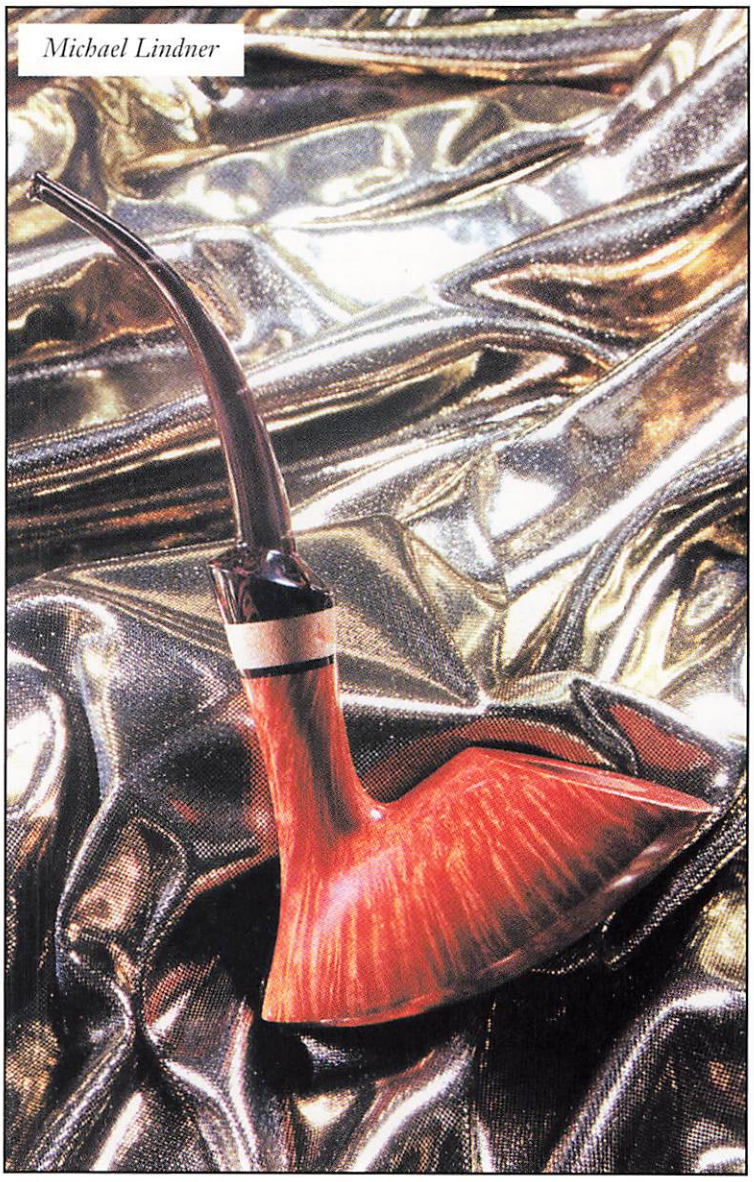
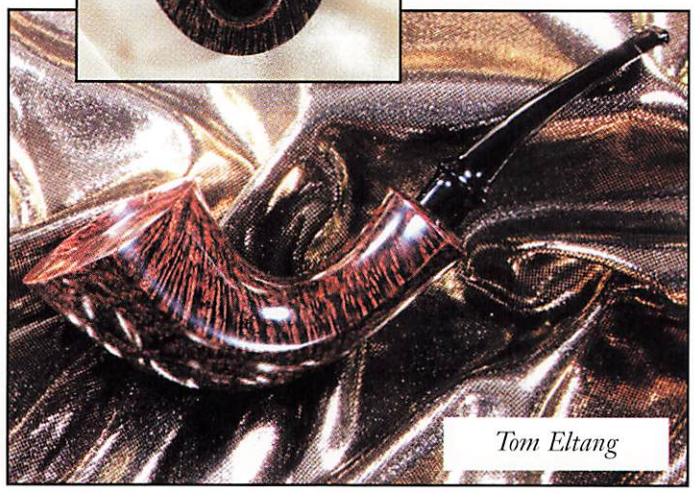

Michael Lindner


Tom Eltang

Walt Cannoy

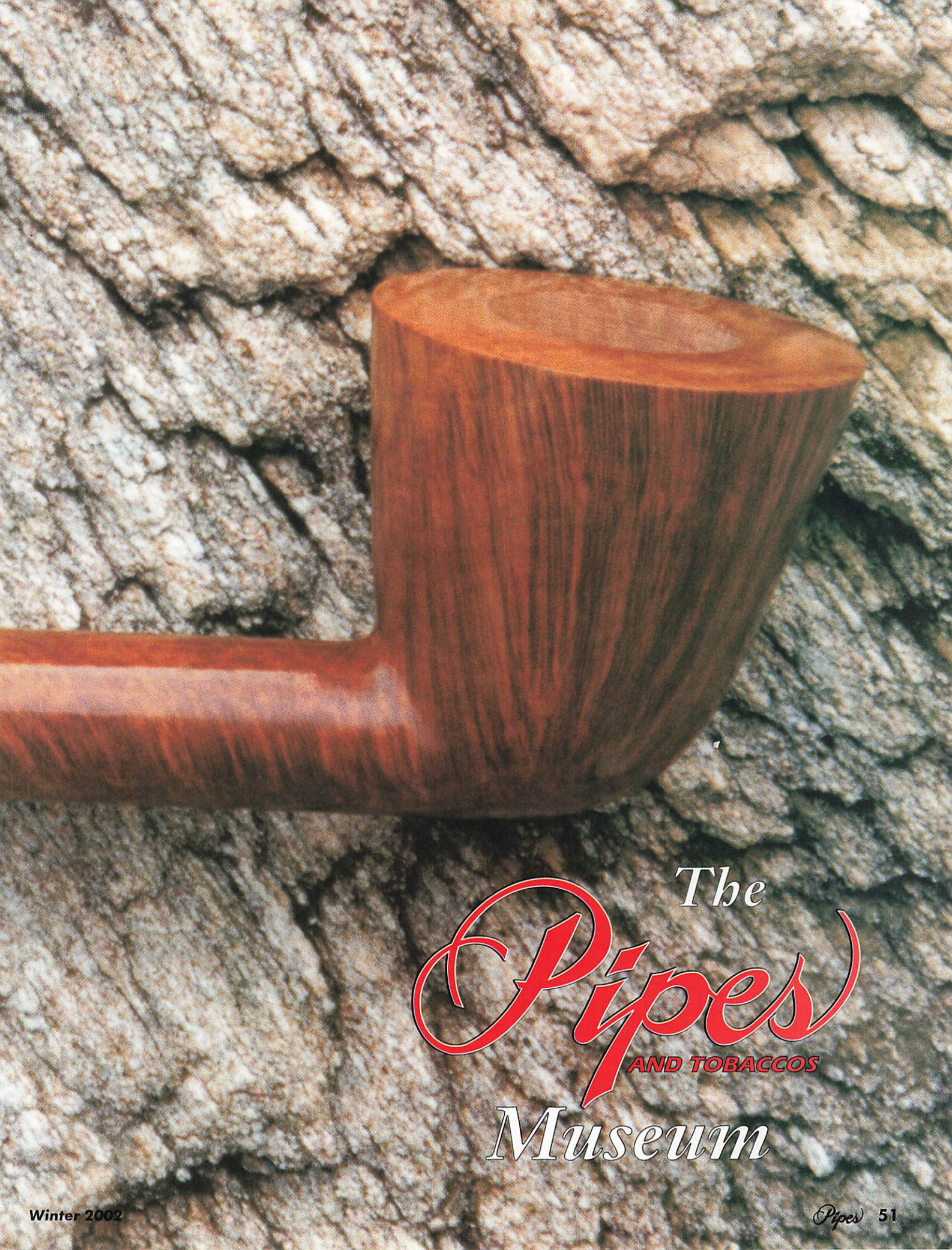
Tonino Jacono

Jacono pipes were almost never made. Tonino Jacono, maker of the highly desired Jacono pipes, smoked his first pipe while he was enrolled in a university in Italy. After some frustrating smoking sessions, Jacono disgustedly threw away both the tobacco and the pipe.

After his college days, Jacono became involved in the briar business through his wife's family. He made smoking accessories, trinkets and earrings before he decided to learn to make pipes. He picked up pipe smoking again so he could discover what made a good smoking pipe.

For more than 20 years, Jacono has carved pipes using only Calabrian briar, which he considers superior to all other briar. Believing it easier to follow the grain of the briar carving by hand, Jacono uses few tools. The quality of his work is universally recognized and he has twice won Best Pipe of Show at the Deep South Classic Pipe Show.

The Jacono grading system is based on chess pieces. Jacono pipes are currently graded as follows: Knight, Knight E (both rusticated); Bishop 1 to 6 (semi-rusticated); Rook; Jack; Queen (alone, then E and EE for better examples); and finally, King (alone and with a single E). The Jacono Dublin pictured here is a Queen EE and it is proudly displayed in the *Pipes and tobaccos* Museum.



The Pipes AND TOBACCOS Museum

Wilderness Artistry

Lee von Erck crafts a remarkably light and visually stimulating pipe in his northern workshop

by Greg Paschak

A trip into Michigan's Upper Peninsula in the spring can be a pure adventure. A sunny, spring-like vista may be suddenly transformed into a wintry landscape where the heavy snow hangs in abundance from pine trees lining the highways. Located somewhere in this wilderness, between Negaunee and Marquette, is the small home of Lee von Erck. Von Erck has produced pipes for more than 15 years with great pride and care in the construction and finish of each of his creations.

The 61-year-old von Erck is lean, tall, and passionate about pipemaking. His interest in pipes began at an early age. His father and grandfather were both pipe smokers, but von Erck did not begin to smoke a pipe until late in the 1950s, when he was stationed in France serving in the United States Army. Because cigarettes were difficult to obtain, many soldiers smoked pipes, and von Erck was no exception. The earliest pipes available to him were the French-made Longchamps, which remain in his collection more than 40 years later.

After his term of service expired, von Erck returned to Marquette, unsure of what to do next. He became a professional dog handler, showing his clients' dogs at dog shows across the country. He showed dogs for more than 20 years, but gave it up at last, as all athletes eventually must, when he felt he had grown too old to do his job effectively. After quitting dog shows, he learned through a friend about a pipe repairman in Minnesota who wanted to get out of the business. Traveling to Minnesota, he struck a deal with the retiring repairman, and after a 10-day crash course in pipe repair, shipped all the repairman's equipment to Marquette.

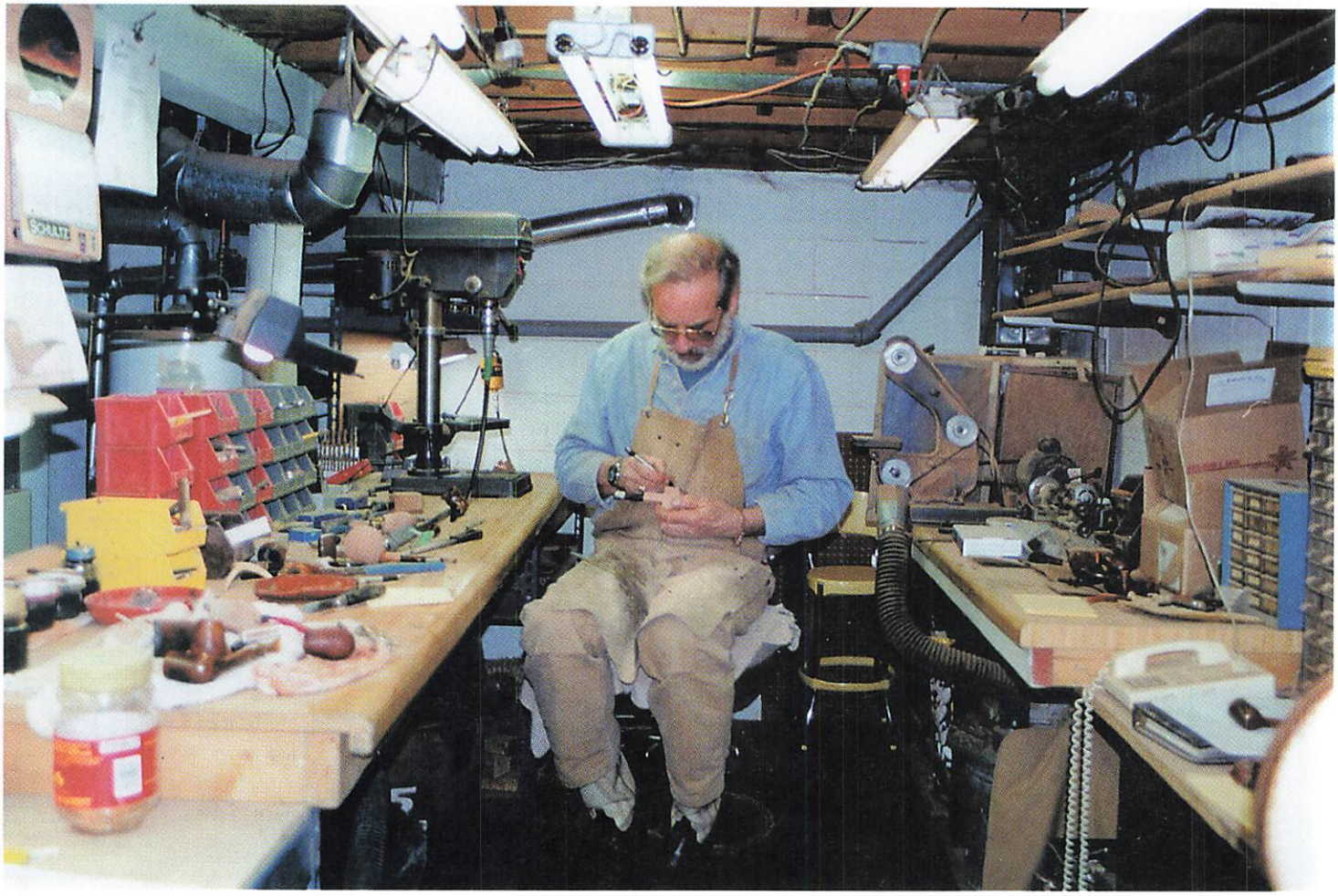
Von Erck exclusively repaired pipes for about a year until, one day, he realized that he wanted to make his own pipes. "I was tired of the same old classical shapes," he admits. "There had to be more in a block of briar than say, a Canadian, or a billiard, or an Oom Paul."

Von Erck's designs create pipes that are meant to be a natural extension of the smoker. "Before I started carving my own pipes," von Erck states, "I always believed that the pipe should fit the person who is smoking it. I'm a tall, skinny guy, so long, skinny pipes are for me. When I can walk into a restaurant with a pipe in my mouth, and have the hostess ask, 'Smoking or nonsmoking?' I know that I have the right pipe!"

Von Erck's design philosophy is simple—he attempts to make each pipe visually stimulating to catch a buyer's eye, to make it so different and fascinating that the buyer will want to pick it up and hold it, and once it is in the buyer's hand, make it feel "right" so that it's difficult to put down again, and, finally, to make it the best smoking pipe possible so that the buyer will be inclined to purchase more von Erck pipes.

While he does many classical shapes, von Erck prefers freehand styles, though the classical shapes allow him to guide the briar to its final shape. "My freehands are adaptations on classical forms. There are only so many shapes—shapes we all know: apple, brandy, bulldog, Rhodesian, Canadian. There are also only so many stem shapes—round, square, diamond, oval. All pipes are combinations of these forms with different stem materials." Many of his freehand pipes are treasured by collectors because of his unique carving and etching techniques, but von Erck insists that he makes pipes intending for each one to be smoked. "I would rather see them being smoked than sitting on a mantle. I make them for smoking!" Some of von Erck's handiwork features antlers from whitetail deer to embellish the ferrule or to serve as a stem extension. He prefers natural products for such additions, but occasionally uses Lucite for an extension or a ferrule detail.

Briar pipecarving is a difficult task to master. "It boggles my mind," von Erck states, "the way the briar can take a turn on you. What you see on the outside of the plateau or ebauchon block is not necessarily what you will



find farther in. It can twist and turn."

The briar often determines the shape of the pipe. "When it comes to making the pipe, it's a matter of putting the lumps and bumps where they will feel the best in the hand," von Erck asserts. "Not all pipes feel the same—some are left-handed and others are right-handed. I try to avoid it as much as possible, but sometimes the briar dictates what you're making."

One of the biggest complaints that von Erck has heard over the years has been that generally, pipe bits are too thick. "I wanted to solve this problem for my pipes, so I thin them down as much as possible to make them more comfortable. I put almost as much work into the bits as I do the pipes." Von Erck uses high-quality, pre-cast vulcanite bits, as well as turned Lucite bits, but he alters each in his own fashion so that no two bits are alike and each fits its intended pipe.

Currently, he does not apply a protective coating to bowls, but admits that he has looked into it and may adopt bowl coating to correct slight flaws on a bowl's interior. The bowl interiors of von Erck's pipes are slightly rough to provide friction for carbon to build cake on the tobacco chamber walls. Von Erck asserts that his proprietary oil-curing process allows his pipes to "break in" very easily.

Von Erck prefers tapered tobacco chambers in his pipes. He believes that the best diameter for a pipe is seven-eighths inch at the top and one-eighth inch at the draft hole. A bowl diameter any larger, says von Erck, will make it difficult to keep the tobacco lit. No matter what the diameter of the bowl, von Erck believes, the true standard of a good smoking pipe is that it smokes dry, cool and long.

Von Erck produces between 250 and 350 pipes each year, most of which are for special orders. He believes that his pipes have improved and changed over the years, becoming more symmetrical and refined in finishing techniques. He does more sandblasting now, but finds it a constant struggle to improve the quality of the briar available to him to use.

Von Erck's ability to see the shape of a potential pipe in a block of briar is perhaps the greatest skill he's developed over the years. A pipe appears almost magically under his hands as he works a block of briar. The stummel, held firmly in one hand, and the grinding tool, held deftly in the other, allow him to precisely release the fluting of the twist pipe on which he is working. Once he finishes the bit and shank, ensuring that their joint is virtually seamless, von Erck declares that the stummel is ready for "the process." Early in his career, von Erck determined that his pipes would be oil-cured, which is a method for replacing the natural moisture and resins in the briar with oils, and then removing the oils, leaving behind cured briar.

This oil-curing process has evolved over the years through tireless experimentation. He started on old pipes, stripped them down to bare wood, discarded the old bits and oil-cured them. He asked his pipe-smoking friends to try them. He also began trying his curing process on fresh briar. "From the beginning, I have kept careful notes on the weight of each of the pipes before and after the curing process, and I have had some pieces lose as much as 25 percent of their original weight," von Erck says. "It's not just moisture loss," he insists. "It's also driving out residual resins and saps that are in the briar. These are what can cause a bitter taste. In

uncured pipes, there was often a bitter taste. The oil-curing drives out the saps and resins and leaves what has been described to me as a nutty flavor."

It takes between two and four weeks to complete the process. Like the Dunhill process, von Erck immerses his pipes in oil and dries them on brass pegs, which allow air to pass through the pipes, drying them more thoroughly. He also wipes his pipe stummels with oil each day. Removing the oil from the pipes takes the most time.

After oil-curing, the grain on the pipes stands out beautifully. Von Erck seldom uses stains, preferring the natural color of the briar after the curing is complete. This color will darken over time as the pipe is smoked. Some stain is used on etched parts to highlight them or contrast them with smooth areas.

Before he leaves the shop each day, he applies a final polish on pipes that are ready for shipment and strides over to his computer office area to check his e-mail, where he invariably finds more online orders for pipes. Von Erck is amazed at the Internet's ability to increase his business. "It's a phenomenon that is hard to believe! You hear about all this going on out there, not just with pipes, but in other industries too, and when it happens to you, it's just mind-boggling. I turn on the computer in the morning and there are orders from Brazil, Hong Kong and Taiwan. It's a really valuable resource."

The most satisfying aspect of von Erck's professional life is when he sees a pipe smoker with a von Erck creation clamped firmly between his teeth. "It's all about the enjoyment of the artistry and attention to detail that goes into each of my pipes. To see someone else enjoying it too gives me a sense of sharing an experience with him." That connection, for Lee von Erck, is what brings real life to his artistry. *P&T*

Nomenclature

Von Erck's pipes are graded according to the quality of briar and the color, shape, size and weight. AAA is the highest grade, but he admits that during his entire pipe-carving career, he has produced only two such pipes. The Triple-A grade defines a pipe as having a very strong straight grain throughout the whole piece, with absolutely no flaws. The AA-grade pipe must have no visible flaws and a reasonably straight grain, with just a hint of a flame grain. An A-grade pipe has fewer than 10 visible flaws. A B-grade pipe has a fill that has no effect on smoking quality. C-grade pipes have a fill that extends to the draft hole or tobacco chamber, but rarely, if ever, are sold to the public.

Von Erck pipe nomenclature is a letter grade followed by five numbers. The first two numbers are the reverse of the year in which the pipe is produced (so if the year is 2001, the first two digits are 10), and the next three digits represent the number of the pipe produced that year. So, a pipe graded A10001 is the first pipe produced in 2001.

Von Erck's pipes are available at select tobacco shops nationwide and through Lee von Erck's Web site, *http://www.von-erck.com*.

The Castello "Remember" Pipe

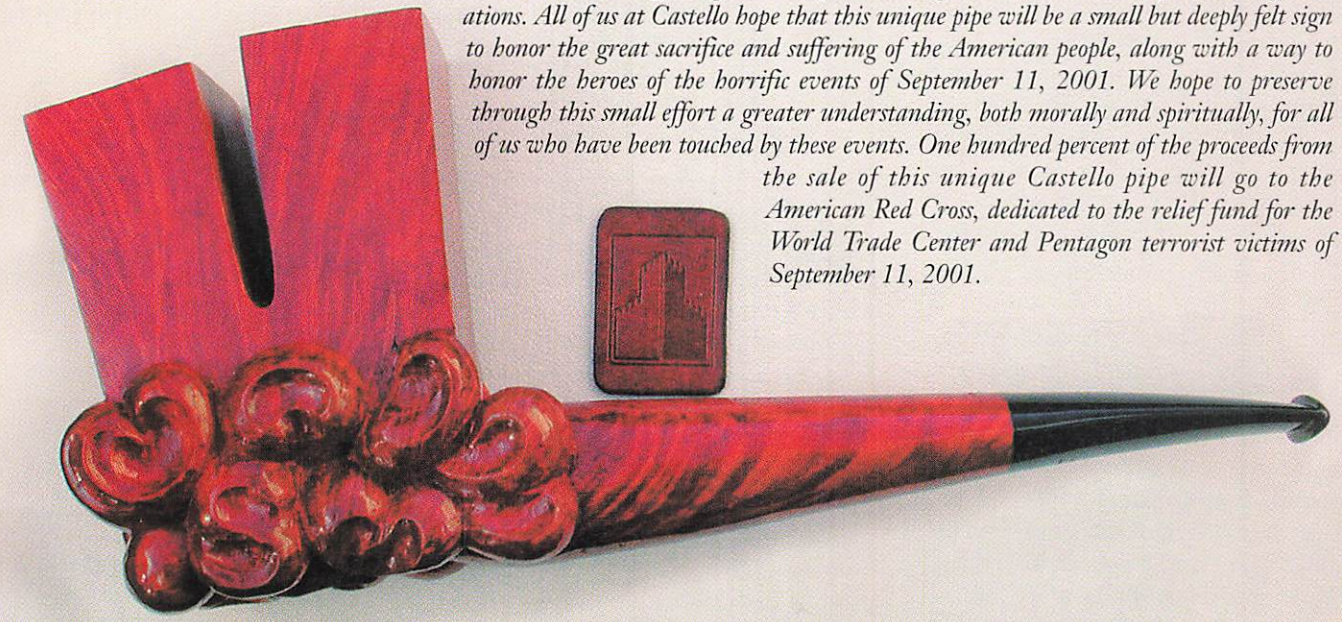
The wonderful people of Italy, like all the rest of the civilized world, were appalled at the barbarous acts of cowardly terrorism that resulted in the murder of more than 5,000 innocent human beings on September 11, 2001. In every city and town in Italy, the people watched their televisions in disbelief, shock and sympathy.

In Cantu, Italy, Franco Coppo of Castello Pipes felt his heart go out to the families and friends of the victims, and he and his staff of artisans decided to do what they could to show their support for the bereaved. Their greatest talent is pipemaking, and they chose to concentrate that talent in an expression of support.

The unique pipe pictured here is the result of that effort. Eleven inches long and five inches high, with two tobacco chambers, it is unprecedented in the history of Castello Pipes. It was auctioned at the Richmond pipe show in October 2001, with all proceeds donated to the American Red Cross. *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine was the winning bidder in that auction, and payment of $4,000 has been forwarded to the Red Cross. The pipe is now on display in the *P&T* Pipe Museum. We thank Castello Pipes for the generous donation to the Red Cross and for the magnificent sculpture that will always remind us, in the context of our own love for pipes, of the courage of those who have been lost.

We reprint here the description of the pipe that Castello provided with the presentation.

This unique Castello pipe was created to render, in a tangible way, homage to the victims and heroes of the insane terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in New York City and Washington D.C. This pipe was created from a superb piece of rare heathwood briar that has been preserved in the Castello Bottega since 1970. Creation of this pipe required more than 18 hours of hand work and was finished on September 21, 2001, in Cantu, Italy. The design shows two towers rising above the clouds, honoring the symbol of the World Trade Center and offering a model of both strength and remembrance for future generations. All of us at Castello hope that this unique pipe will be a small but deeply felt sign to honor the great sacrifice and suffering of the American people, along with a way to honor the heroes of the horrific events of September 11, 2001. We hope to preserve through this small effort a greater understanding, both morally and spiritually, for all of us who have been touched by these events. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the sale of this unique Castello pipe will go to the American Red Cross, dedicated to the relief fund for the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist victims of September 11, 2001.



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I have just acquired a beautiful Ropp briar pipe in unsmoked condition in the original box. The pipe is finished inside. What is the best way to remove the finish inside the bowl? I don't plan to smoke this unique pipe because so few Ropp briars ever make it to the States. I plan to keep it for my collection. Is there any way to keep the stem from oxidizing? Is there a "secret" way to clean an oxidized stem?

Fil Nutter Jr.

I'm not sure if the finish you mention is a stain or if it is a bowl coating. Because you don't intend to smoke it, I'd advise leaving it as is. If it is stain, it should be removed before smoking just because it will taste a lot better without stain. Alcohol, preferably Everclear or 100-proof vodka (preferred because they have little flavor), will take that out with one to several applications with a cloth or pipe cleaners. If it's very stubborn, you may need to sand it out with steel wool or extra-fine sandpaper.

If it is a bowl coating, it may be removed in the same way. Bowl coatings serve an important purpose (in most cases). This is an issue, however, only if you're going to smoke the pipe. Not all bowl coatings are equal. Some are tasteless and beneficial for insulating the wall of the tobacco chamber during the all-important first few smokes and to help build a cake by providing a sticky surface for carbon to cling to. Others are rank, despicable concoctions that make your tobacco taste like squirrel fur. Many smokers prefer pipes that provide tobacco chambers of bare wood only, probably because they have firsthand experience with the squirrel-fur variety of bowl coatings. Different makers use different formulas, and that is undoubtedly a contributing factor in why different people have different preferences in pipes.

As for vulcanite stems, there is no easy solution. If oxidation has set in, you'll need some Tripoli compound and a buffing wheel to clean it, or an extraordinary amount of time and elbow grease. (For more detailed information on cleaning stems, please refer to our Fall 1998 issue, page 32). If you just wish to prevent oxidation, rubbing the entire pipe with Briar Pipe Wipe (available at tobacco shops) after each smoke will help maintain the black gloss that we all prefer on our stems.

Carnauba Wax

As I was revisiting one of my back issues (Fall 1997, Mark Twain cover), I ran across one of your responses to a question that stated that an individual should keep a good coat of carnauba wax on his pipes. Is there a carnauba wax specifically for pipes and, if so, where do I get some of it and how much and how often should I apply the wax? I know that some car polishes have carnauba wax in them, but you are not talking about using these, or are you? Along these same lines, is there any way to remove very, very minor surface scratches on a pipe without damaging the finish?

Gary M. Brunson

We have an advertiser that provides carnauba wax as well as other pipemaking and pipe maintenance supplies. You can find the ad for PIMO supplies on page 39 of this issue. You may need to order buffing wheels while you have them on the phone, because the best way to remove very minor scratches is with a buffing wheel. Deeper scratches may require refinishing the pipe. When first practicing with buffing wheels, definitely practice with an old pipe—you can really do some damage if you let the wheel grab the pipe, and you'll need to practice hanging on tightly to it while it's under the wheel. I don't recommend a Dremel tool; they are too fast and can actually burn a stem or damage the wood of a pipe if you aren't careful. A buffing wheel offers a larger surface area and is much safer.

The frequency of application for carnauba wax depends on how much you smoke the pipe. The wax not only protects the finish but provides the high-gloss shine that makes a pipe look new, and it dulls with use and handling. You want to be careful not to buff and wax so vigorously or often that you fade the nomenclature or lines of the pipe. But only your own preferences can tell you how often your pipes need new wax.

Larsen Orientation

I have a Larsen Straight Grain, graded either 6 or 9. How do I tell which way to orient the pipe to determine whether it reads 6 or 9?

Mike Hagley

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Hold the pipe with the stamp facing you and with the stem pointing downward to correctly position the number.

Humidor Advice

Regarding your answer to the inquiry on humidors in the Summer 2001 Ask Chuck: Forget the Mason jars! I've been using glass Ball-type jars that are provided with the most deliciously flavorful preserves I've ever tasted from Clearbrook Farms of Shardonville, Ohio (available in many specialty food stores). The empty and washed (unless trying to create a new Cavendish) jars are more than adequate to accommodate a 50-gram tin of one's favorite mixture and they do as good a job of preserving tobacco as they do with the preserves, although, sadly, I don't go through tobacco nearly as fast as I do the preserves. Such a deal!

Rich Ford

For Mr. Eric Peters of Saline, Michigan, who wrote to you asking about humidors, here's a suggestion that may be helpful. I buy the glass jars used for cookies, flour, etc., that can be found in houseware-type stores. For about $6 I can get a jar with a good seal that will hold about a half pound of tobacco. For another $2, I buy a clay disk at a tobacco store (J.R. Cigars stocks them here in northern New Jersey). The disk comes with Velcro so it is easily attached/removed from the top of the glass jar. For a bit more money you can get jars that will hold up to 2 pounds of flour, which should easily hold 1 pound of bulk tobacco with room to spare. The clay disks are 1.5 to 1.75 inches in diameter and one-quarter to one-half inch thick (not including the Velcro). They will easily humidify 1 pound of tobacco when completely saturated. I tend to keep them a bit less moist for the 8-ounce jars. I currently have five or six different types of Virginia tobaccos that I smoke, so this is an economical alternative to buying the jars made specifically for pipe tobacco.

Tom Distefano

Cleaning the lip button slot

I have thoroughly enjoyed your magazine from the first issue and am among those who wish you could publish more often. After gaining so much from your articles, I thought I would share a pipe-cleaning tip with your readers. I have been cleaning and repairing pipes for three years and have found that one place is often overlooked when cleaning. The slot in the lip of the stem is often not smoothly joined to the smoke hole and clogs with tar and pipe cleaner fuzz, thus helping to sour the smoke. I have seen many stems so badly clogged that only a small hole, large enough for a pipe cleaner, remains. It is easily cleaned by using a fairly stiff wire. When cut, the end of the wire forms a chisel-like edge. This is ideal for digging out the mess. It is best done dry and followed by rinsing with an alcohol-based cleaner. Thanks again for so much great reading.

Ian Belton

Most tobacco shops also sell stiff pipe brushes that are excellent for this sort of cleaning. They are stiff wire and plastic brushes and, when used with grain alcohol, they do a terrific job of cleaning.

The After Hours Pipe Club
Meetings are the first Monday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Vintage Restaurant in the Gage shopping center in Topeka, Kansas. If you need more information, call the staff at Churchill's, 785.273.0102; e-mail *afterhourspc@hotmail.com*; or visit *www.homestead.com/afterhourspc*.

Arrowhead Pipe Club
This club sponsors such events as the Michigan Regional Pipe Smoking Contest in Durand, Michigan. For further information, contact Dan Spaniola, Arrowhead Pipe Club, c/o Paul's Pipe Shop, 647 South Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502.

Atlanta Pipe Club
The Atlanta Pipe Club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at Royal Cigar Co., 2179 Briarcliff Road, Atlanta, Georgia, on the corner of Briarcliff and LaVista Rd. Call Joyce White at 404.329.0088 or e-mail Kelly Crow at *kelcro@mindspring.com* for additional information about the club or for directions.

Briars Club
Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Ridgewood Tobacco shop on Chestnut Street in Ridgewood, New Jersey. For additional information, contact Howard at 201.767.4961 or *briarsclub2001@yahoo.com*.

Briar Squires Pipe Club
Formed in 1979, the club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at different locations in the Jacksonville, Florida area. Annual pipe-smoking contests are held on the Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day. For further information, contact Briar Squires, P.O. Box 61446, Jacksonville, FL 32226, or Cy Jones at 904.739.8190.

Broad River Smokers' Conclave
The Broad River Smokers' Conclave meets on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are held at Tobacco Road Smoke Shop in historic downtown Shelby, North Carolina. For information, contact Chris Tallent at 704.487.7868; e-mail *brsc@wncnet.com*; or see the club's Web site at *www.wncnet.com/smokeit*.

Burlington Pipe Club
Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at The Dickens Pub, Elizabeth Street, Burlington, Ontario. For more information, contact Roberto Kiernan at 905.387.1435.

Calumet Pipe Club
Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month at Finnegan's Irish Pub, 3310 Memorial Parkway in Huntsville, Alabama. For additional information, contact L. Fred Scarborough, e-mail: *scarborough@camber.com*.

Capital Area Pipe Smokers (CAPS)
Based in Fairfax, Virginia, this long-established club meets on the third Wednesday of every other month, approximately every six weeks, and frequently hosts guest speakers at its meetings. CAPS will be holding its first pipe show on Saturday, July 13, 2002, at the Washington Dulles Holiday Inn, 1000 Sully Road, Dulles VA 20166. Call the hotel for reservations at 703.471.7411 and mention the Washington Pipe Show for a special discount rate. For more information concerning the Washington Pipe Show or other CAPS events, contact Randy Evans, (*raevans@outdrs.net*), David Silver (888.834.7140), or visit the Web site, *http://Caps_pipe.tripod.com*.

Central Florida Pipe Club
The Central Florida Pipe Club meets on the last Thursday of each month at The Tobacco Merchant in Jacobsen's Plaza in Longwood, Florida, from 6 to 9 p.m. For more information, contact Don Hockman Jr. at 407.647.3200 or e-mail *orlandopipe@yahoo.com*.

Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts (COPE)
COPE meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Royal Bavaria Brauhaus & Restaurant, 3401 S. Sooner Road, Moore, Oklahoma. Times may change. For further information, contact COPE, P.O. Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153; or e-mail *jhaldeman@bix.com*.

Chesapeake Pipe Club
Informal meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Champion Billiards, 1969 E. Joppa Road (next to Home Depot in the Perring Plaza), Towson, MD 21234. For further information, call Bill Maitz at 410.825.8940.

Christopher Morley Pipe Club of Philadelphia
The Christopher Morley Club meets the third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Cuvée Notredame, 17th and Green

Travel through time? Who wants to travel through time? I built this machine to age my briar.

Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For further information, call Bob Page at 215.567.2972.

Chicagoland International Pipe and Tobacciana Show
The Chicagoland International Pipe and Tobacciana Show will be held April 19-21, 2002, at the Pheasant Run Resort located at 4051 East Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174. Reservation telephone numbers: 800.999.3319 or 630.584.6300. Mention that you are with the Chicagoland International Pipe and Tobacciana Show group and receive the special rate. The resort features fun for the whole family, including golf, dinner theater and a comedy club. Check out its Web site, *Pheasantrun.com*, for more details.

Circulo de la Pipa Mexico D.F.
This Mexico City pipe smokers' club meets on the first Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Otro Lugar de la Mancha, Esopo #11, casi esquina con Av. Mazarik, Col. Polanco. For additional information, contact Gustavo Chavezcamacho at *pipaclubdf@listbot.com*, or visit the club Web site at *circulodelapipa.homestead .com/Bienvenida.html*.

Confrere of Indiana Briar Friars
For specific information on meeting times and places, contact Stephen Williams at 765.282.0229.

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. Contact Ed Price, *epr065@airmail.net*.

Fresno Pipe Club
The Fresno Pipe Club meets on the third Sunday of each month at 6 p.m. at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Fresno, California. For more information, contact Douglas A. Pitts at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Manchester Center, 3402 N. Blackstone, Suite 124, Fresno, CA 93726; telephone 209.228.1389; or e-mail *dpitts@gte.net*.

Goodfellows Pipe Club
If you live in Hawaii, or are just vacationing there, Goodfellows Pipe Club invites you to attend its meetings, held the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Cigar Emporium, 98-1254 Kaahumanu Street, Units A-4 and A-5, Pearl City, HI 96782. For further information, contact Dale James Neff at 808.484.5757 or fax 808.484.5755.

Great Northern Pipe Club
Serving the Minneapolis/St. Paul area and surrounding communities, this club meets informally on the third Sunday of each month at 1:30 p.m., usually at the Maplewood Lanes, Lower Level, 1955 English Street, Maplewood, Minnesota. For additional information, contact Jon Werner at *gnpipeclub@aol.com*, or Tony Espeseth at 800.353.7378.

Greater Kansas City Pipe Club
The Greater Kansas City Pipe Club meets on the third Thursday of each month at Cigar & Tabac, 103 Metcalf Center in Overland Park, Kansas, at 8 p.m. The club also hosts an annual pipe show in the fall. For further information on either the show or the club, call Mark Wilson at 816.525.1137 or e-mail him at *stoge2go@qni.com*.

Hudson Valley (N.Y.) Pipe Club
Formed in 1997, the Hudson Valley Pipe Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. Because the meetings take place at a number of different restaurants in the mid-Hudson Valley, contact one of the following people for location and further

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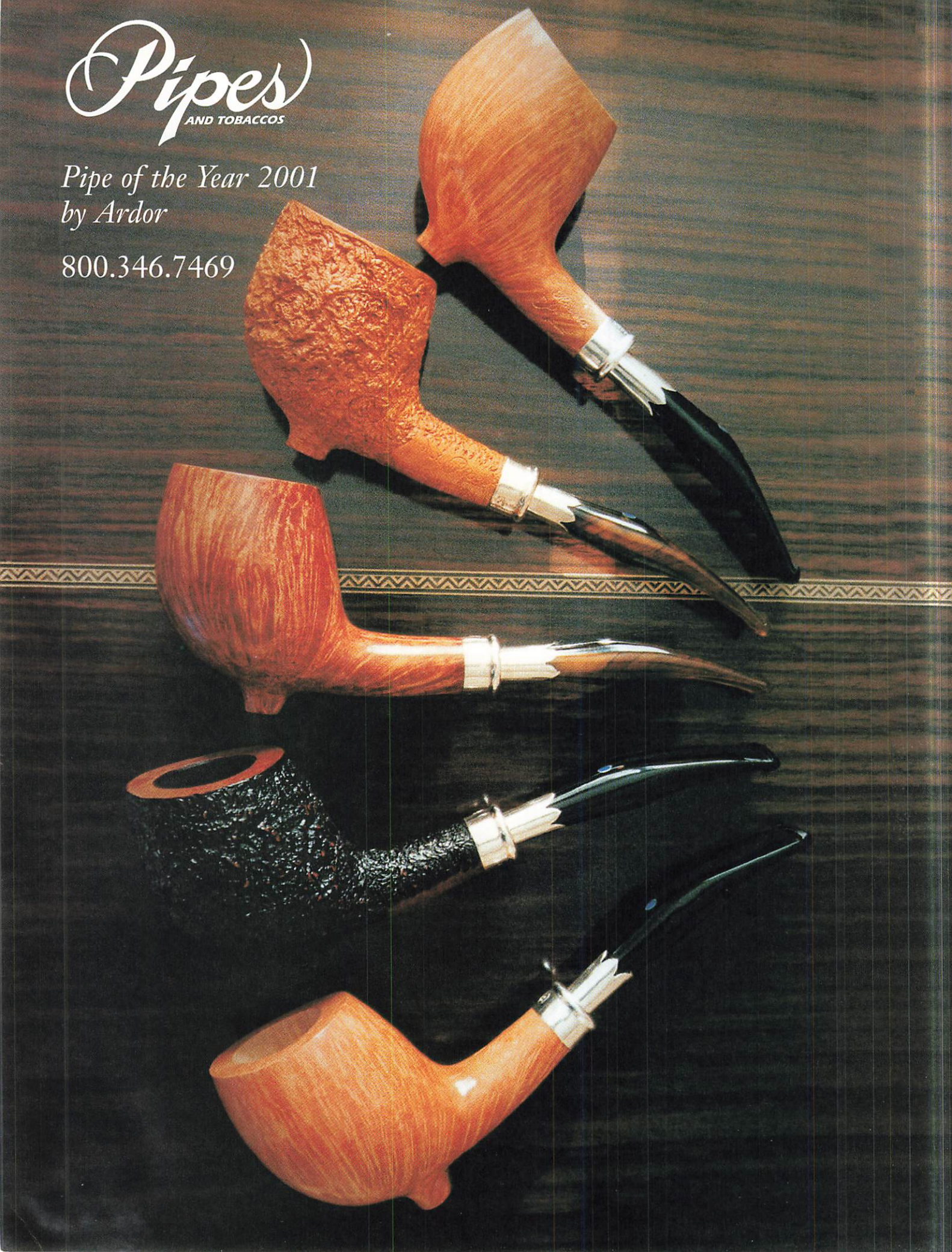
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information: Al DiFalco, 914.756.2574; Rob Denholtz, 914.462.2495 or *den@ulster.net*; Steve Abrams, 914.679.8430 or *snabra@aol.com*.

Knoxville Area Pipe Smokers (KAPS)
Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The club has hosted speakers from the pipe and tobacco industry, pipe-smoking contests and swap meets. Because the meeting locations vary, contact the club's Web site, *www.knoxareapipesmokers.org*, or Randy Pedigo at 865.637.7565 or *rpedigo@usit.net*.

Memphis Area Pipe Smokers (MAPS)
Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the cigar lounge at the Marriott Hotel, 2625 Thousand Oaks Blvd. (near I-240 and Perkins Rd.). For additional information, e-mail Bob at *info@pipeclub.org*, or visit the club's Web page at *www.pipeclub.org*. Plans will soon be announced for the MAPS inaugural pipe show on May 4, 2002.

Milwaukee Area Pipe Society
The Milwaukee Area Pipe Society meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jack's Tobacco and M.C.S., 13640-A W. Capitol Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. For information, contact Joe Harb at Jack's, 262.783.7473, or visit the Web site at *www.execpc.com/~perique*.

Mt. Town Society of Kapnismologists
Meetings are held the first and third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Smokers Club, 100 S. Mission Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. For additional information, contact Kat Gartner at 517.775.8536, or e-mail *gart@sensible-net*.

Murfreesboro Pipe and Tobacco Club
Meetings are held the second Monday of each month in the banquet room at Puffing Billy's Restaurant on Broad Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, at 6:30 p.m.

New York Pipe Club
The New York Pipe Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month, generally at Runyon's, on Second Avenue near 49th Street, at 6 p.m. Anyone wishing up-to-date meeting information may phone Sailorman Jack at 212.288.3832 on the day of a meeting.

North Oakland Tobacco and Pipe Club (NOTPC)
This Detroit-area club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month and occasionally on weekends as well. Meeting locations vary in the Metro Detroit area. For information about upcoming meetings, contact Terry McGinty at 248.471.0195 or Michael Lindner at 248.844.8209, or e-mail *mlindner@pobox.com*.

Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers
The Pipe Puffers meet on the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. and the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Tobacco Plus Store in the Midway Plaza in Highland, Arkansas. For more information, contact Dick Alexander, Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers, 32 Alma Lane, Hardy, AR 72542-9487; call 870.856.4100 or 870.856.4433; e-mail *dalexander@arkansastobaccoplus.com* or visit *www.arkansastobaccoplus.com*.

Pipe Club de France
For additional information, contact President Alain Letulier, 38 rue du Chevalier de la Barre, F59175 Templemars; e-mail: *alainletulier@compuserve.com*.

Pipe Club of Taiwan
For additional information, contact Ben Chen, P.O. Box 83-53, Taipei 111, Taiwan; e-mail: *hanworld@ ms29.hinet.net*.

Raleigh Pipe Show
Triangle Area Pipe Smokers (TAPS) proudly announces a Raleigh Pipe Show taking place on March 16, 2002. The show, being held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., will be located at the Jim Holshouser Building at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds. For reservations, call the Ramada Inn, 1520 Blue Ridge Rd., 919.832.4100. For more information, contact Jim Swindell at 919.380.0780. TAPS holds its monthly dinner meeting each second Tuesday at O'Charleys Restaurant on Six Forks Road. Meetings start at 6:30 p.m. and feature pipe sales and trading, tobacco sampling, great food and more. Pipe-smoking guests are welcome. For more information, contact Jim Carrino at 919.848.0685 or e-mail *pipechief@mindspring.com*.

Sacramento Pipe Collector's Assembly (SPCA)
Meets monthly, usually on the third Thursday at 6 p.m. Informal meetings take place in downtown Sacramento, California, at 1325 O Street #1. For more information and to confirm meeting times, contact Gary Malmberg, 916.442.6027 or 916.929.8965.

Seattle Pipe Club
This club meets on the second Wednesday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Issaquah

CLUBS AND EVENTS

Tinderbox (club room), exit I-90, Pickering Place, 1810-12th Ave. N.W., #C2. For additional information, contact Ron Butler at *crenterprise@unidial.com*, 253.927.3672; Matt Guss at *matt@reallysmart.com*, 206.903.6542; or Nathan Reasoner at 800.647.7833; or visit the Web site at *www.seattlepipeclub.org*.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club of Boston
Meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information, contact Mark Maxfield, *barley_shpc@ yahoo.com*, or Don Powers, 781.449.0380.

St. Louis Pipe Club
Meetings are on the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at John Dengler Tobacconist, 700 S. Main, St. Charles, Missouri, and the fourth Saturday of each month at 7 p.m. at Town & Country Tobacco, 13933 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, Missouri. For further information on the club or on the Gateway Area Pipe Show held each February, contact Jay Milton at 618.288.2090 or Bob Calloway at 636.946.8555.

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
The South Florida Briar Brotherhood meets the third Thursday of each month at the London Pub Too in Margate, Florida. The club sponsors an annual 60-table pipe show, The Southern Pipe Expo, each January. For more information on the club or show, contact Grant Porter, 954.741.8595, or see the club's Web site at *www.se.mediaone.net/~pipesman*.

South Jersey Pipe and Cigar Club
Meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Your Cigar Box, 703 Tilton Road, Northfield, NJ 08225. For additional information, call 609.645.3345.

Toronto Pipe Club
Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 2 p.m. until it is decided to leave, usually 4 or 5 p.m. Contact Ian Belton for the location and any other details at 905.857.6108; fax 905.857.8863; or e-mail *ibelton@inforamp.net*.

Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco Club/Show
The TSPTC is a Fort Wayne, Indiana-based club that holds monthly meetings. TSPTC also announces its third annual pipe show at Don Hall's Guesthouse in Fort Wayne on Feb. 9, 2002. Check out the Web site, *www.tsptc.org*, or contact Larry A. Rathburn at 219.672.8802 or *rathpipe@aol.com* for more information concerning the TSPTC or the pipe show.

Waco Pipe Club
This club meets on the last Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame Museum, 1108 S. University Parks Drive in Waco, Texas. For additional information, contact Steve Fallon at 254.754.3258.

Washington Area Pipe Smokers
The Washington Area Pipe Smokers meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at The Smoke Shop, 940 W. Chestnut Street, Washington, Pennsylvania. For additional information, contact Paula J. Fenelon at The Smoke Shop, 724.228.3266.

To add your club listing, please send your information, including club name, meeting place and time and contact information, to Clubs and Events, *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029; or e-mail *chuck@pt-magazine.com*.

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